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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-95-031 *15 February 1995*

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Arab-Israeli Talks

Israeli-Palestinian Joint Patrols Set Precedent

NC1402083795 Paris AFP in English 0022 GMT 14 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Khan Yunus, Gaza Strip, Feb 14 (AFP)—Joint Israeli-Palestinian patrols in the Gaza Strip have set a rare precedent as a product of the self-rule accord which actually works despite setbacks in the peace process.

"Now we are buddies with the Israelis," says Palestinian police sergeant Khalid Sa'id, 27, driving his Chevrolet on the road between the coast and the dunes beside the Gush Katif Jewish settlement block. He is followed by an Israeli military jeep.

"We really have to get along with the Israelis, because if we regarded them as enemies we would never manage to achieve peace," Sa'id adds.

Four armed men travel in each vehicle marked with an orange flag—the symbol of the joint patrols. They raise a cloud of dust, stopping occasionally to let a donkey cart or a busload of settlers pass by.

Nine patrols constantly monitor the roads in the south of the autonomous Strip, working eight-hour shifts.

Their task is to resolve any disputes between Palestinians and the Israeli settlers, more than 5,000 of whom live on the Strip.

Some 180 Israelis and Palestinians carry out joint patrols in the south of the Strip and 90 in the north.

They submit their reports to the district coordination office, which monitors the operations from its headquarters in Khan Yunus.

Israeli colonel Michael Kobi, manning the operations desk, stresses the limits of cooperation with the Palestinian police.

"The Palestinians don't want us here, but they have to accept it and cooperate with us," he says.

"The two populations have to be allowed to coexist and the two armed forces by no means agree always on how to interpret the clauses of the autonomy accord."

Palestinian self-rule was launched in Gaza and the Jericho enclave on the West Bank last May, in line with the Israeli-PLO autonomy deal signed in Washington in September 1993.

"The accord works very well where cooperation is concerned," says Kobi, "but very badly as regards security."

Israeli troops shot dead three Palestinian policemen on January 2 at the main crossing between Israel and the Gaza Strip. The army said the policemen had fired first.

The army is wary of certain elements of the Palestinian police force, which it says has been infiltrated by Muslim fundamentalists.

Israel also accuses the Palestinian police of not doing enough to prevent anti-Israeli attacks by hardliners opposed to the autonomy deal.

The joint patrol stops for lunch at 2:00 p.m.—an opportunity for relaxed conversation, although Israelis and Palestinians do not always eat together.

"We drink coffee, have a bite to eat, talk about women," says Ashraf Muhammad, a 27-year-old Palestinian policeman who was born in Algeria.

Kobi says the district coordination office is where "understanding reigns between Israelis and Palestinians."

The office consists of four mobile homes—two for each side—an operations room and a joint conference room.

Kobi's Palestinian opposite number, Colonel Rif'ah 'Arafat, alias Abu-Farid, winks at the Israeli officer.

"We're like a loving family now," he says.

However, he complains that Israel's closure of the Palestinian territories is "an economic blockade which challenges our (self-rule) authority."

He says the Palestinians in Gaza are "like the living dead."

"They are desperate. Sometimes it is easier for them to choose death and go in for suicide attacks."

Israel sealed off the Gaza Strip and West Bank after two Islamic Jihad suicide bombers killed 21 Israelis near the coastal resort of Netanya on January 22.

The closure has prevented 50,000 Palestinians going to work in Israel.

Inter-Arab Affairs

Committee on Eliminating Mass Destruction Arms Meets

NC1402133895 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1120 GMT 14 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 14 Feb (MENA)—The Arab League Ministerial Council's committee in charge of preparing a report on making the Middle East "free of mass destruction weapons" began its meetings at the League's headquarters this morning.

The committee met under the cochairmanship of Ambassador 'Adnan 'Imran, assistant secretary general for international political affairs, and Dr. Nu'man Jalal, Egypt's permanent delegate to the Arab League and chairman of the committee.

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At the beginning of the meeting, Egypt's delegate delivered a speech in which he underlined the need to free the Middle East of mass destruction weapons in accordance with the League decision in that connection. He stated that the elimination of mass destruction weapons is a primary issue for pan-Arab security, noting that the issue was submitted for discussion at many UN conferences.

Dr. Jalal referred to the initiative presented by Egypt in cooperation with Iran in 1974, calling for declaring the Middle East a nuclear-free zone. He then pointed to President Mubarak's initiative in April 1990 to free the Middle East of mass destruction weapons.

Jalal pointed out that Egypt submitted President Mubarak's initiative to the Arab League Council, which adopted a number of decisions in that connection and voiced support for the initiative that reflects the pan-Arab general feeling.

The committee chairman affirmed that there is full agreement on principles and goals to serve common pan-Arab interests through dialogue with member and neighboring states from a strategic perspective. He added that this is a unified Arab stand dictated by considerations of common interest, affiliation with the Arab nation, and desire to preserve pan-Arab security.

He added that the Arab nation engages in a dialogue with neighboring states prompted by its belief in a just and comprehensive peace on all the fronts, the liberation of Arab lands, and the achievement of security for all the states and not for a specific state. He stressed that no state or party should be excepted.

Ambassador 'Adnan 'Imran delivered a speech in which he stressed that arriving at the declaration of a Middle East free of all mass destruction weapons is a major objective that our Arab states seek to achieve in the interest of all regional states, without exception.

Speaking to the technical committee that involves 36 states concerned with developing an agreement to declare the Middle East free of mass destruction weapons, 'Imran said that the Arab desire to achieve that goal is evidence of the Arab states' concern for the just and comprehensive peace that opens our future to development, progress, and flourishing. He pointed out that this Arab desire is respected by the international community because it is based on the provisions of the UN Charter and the rules of international law that underline people's right to take all the necessary measures to defend themselves without committing or threatening to commit aggression.

Ambassador 'Imran stressed that the Arab states' independence and sovereignty will lose their meaning with the continued existence of the Israeli nuclear umbrella that threatens every Arab state both in case of aggression or peace. He remarked that Israel's continued nuclear armament activity will necessarily turn into a tool of extortion that culminates in a destructive war.

'Imran referred to Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa's remarks in Washington yesterday, in which he affirmed that "no state should be an exception to that commitment because this is unacceptable. Musa pointed out that Egypt will act according to the dictates of pan-Arab and regional security.

The assistant secretary general referred also to the foreign minister's demand to subject the Israeli nuclear program to international treaties, since the region cannot live with an unknown nuclear program that might trigger a nuclear arms race.

'Adnan 'Imran, assistant Arab League secretary general for political affairs, expressed confidence that the Arab League's follow-up committee on the removal of weapons of mass destruction will formulate the Arab ideas for a united Arab stand on the extension of the NPT [Non-Proliferation Treaty] in a draft agreement and will draw up a security framework for reaching an agreement to make the Middle East free from weapons of mass destruction.

'Imran praised the efforts made by the Egyptian Foreign Ministry in also preparing a draft agreement. He said that the observations voiced by the member states on the draft agreement reflect the importance that we all place in this issue in order to achieve a joint Arab stand on one of the most important issues facing our Arab countries, and which concerns overall pan-Arab security.

He added that the preparatory committee in charge of discussing the extension of the NPT which concluded its meetings in New York recently stressed that the nuclear countries are trying to consolidate their monopoly of nuclear weapons and insist on imposing an embargo on nuclear technology using a selective logic that shows the ugliness of the picture and the seriousness of double standards. It also wants to give Israel the right to monopolize nuclear weapons in the Middle East region and wants to prevent the Arab countries from even possessing nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

The Arab League Council decided in its previous sessions to form a committee to formulate an Arab stand on the extension of the NPT and draw up a security framework favoring all the countries of the region by reaching an agreement that makes the Middle East free from weapons of mass destruction. It decided to report on its work to the next Arab League Council meeting on 22 March.

Delegates View Outcome of Meetings

NC1402211595 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1830 GMT 14 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 14 Feb (MENA)—Dr. Nu'man Jalal, Egypt's permanent delegate to the Arab League, has affirmed that the Arab policy on the draft agreement to make the Middle East region free of weapons of mass destruction is serious, as is the need to set up this region.

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In statements, after the technical committee—a group stemming from the Arab League Council—concluded its meetings this evening, he clarified that there are no differences among the views of the committee's delegates. He said there were discussions and dialogues regarding viewpoints on the formulations and concepts, particularly since the items on which discussion is finalized in the draft agreement are technical items.

He said that the committee will resume its meetings tomorrow morning to finalize discussions on the rest of the items of the draft agreement. He pointed out that what they discussed today was the preamble of the draft agreement and two items of the 14 contained in the draft.

Prince Turki Bin-Muhammad Bin-Sa'ud, director general of the International Organizations' Department at the Saudi Foreign Ministry and head of his country's delegation to the meetings of the technical committee, expressed his hope that the committee will successfully reach an agreement on a united Arab concept that will serve the Arab interests and turn the Middle East region into a zone free of weapons of mass destruction.

He said that some opinions and suggestions were presented during the committee meetings to develop this agreement to adhere to the aspirations, requirements, and conditions of the region as well as developments in the international arena.

The Saudi official noted that there are no specific Saudi proposals on this matter. Regarding the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT], he clarified that the NPT is not a topic for discussion during the meetings of the technical committee. The technical committee is entrusted with preparing a report on making the Middle East region free of weapons of mass destruction.

Islamic Affairs

Political Islam Review: AL-SHA'B 10 Feb

NC1402095295

[FBIS Editorial Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 10 February edition of the Arabic-language newspaper AL-SHA'B that pertain to political Islamic issues.

CONTENTS:

1. Unionists Protest Proposed Amendments to Law
2. State Department Report on Human Rights Published
3. Group Warns Egypt Could Turn Into Another Algeria
4. Writer Questions Mubarak's Remarks on Muslim Brotherhood
5. Cairo Summit's Implications for Islamists Viewed
6. NATO Adopts Islamic Fundamentalism as New Enemy
7. Scholar Says Building Individuals Take Precedence

UNIONISTS PROTEST PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO LAW

Unionists are said to be in a fury over what they see as a government-backed plan to introduce amendments to Law 100 of the year 1993 governing union elections, writes Khalid Yunus in an approximately 800-word report on pages 1 and 6. The amendments, already passed by the People's Assembly on 12 February, grant "broad powers to the judicial committee overseeing the elections, giving it full power to run the elections and thus grant victory to the government candidates," the report notes. For that purpose, unionists held a meeting at the Lawyers Association on 8 February and promised to "resort to all means of protests at the government's ferocious onslaught against the freedom of the associations, including the staging of strikes and sit-ins and the convening of general assemblies to discuss ways to confront the government's offensive," the report notes.

STATE DEPARTMENT REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS PUBLISHED

The first part of the U.S. State Department's report on human rights "violations" in Egypt is published in approximately 6,000 words on page 2. In introducing the report, the paper writes: "Despite our known differences with the U.S. Administration over the double standards used in dealing with the issue of human rights and many international issues, we publish this report in view of what it represents in terms of high credibility in verifying the information. It also confirms the Egyptian Human Rights Organization's reports on violations of Egyptian human rights. This shows that we encourage what the West and the United States say about freedoms provided it is truly abided by. Will this report be a step on that road?"

The paper promises to publish the second part of the report, dealing with "respect for civil liberties," in a future issue.

GROUP WARNS EGYPT COULD TURN INTO ANOTHER ALGERIA

A new report by the Egyptian Human Rights Organization released on 8 February warns that Egypt could become a new Algeria as a result of the increasing acts of violence in al-Minya, which claimed the lives of more than 100 policemen and members of the Islamic groups in the past two months, writes Qutb al-'Arabi in an approximately 600-word report on pages 1 and 6. The report notes that the increasing acts of violence by the armed militants suspected of belonging to the Islamic Group as well as the "new techniques" followed by the security agencies, such as the wide-scale random arrests, hostage-taking, and destruction of fields, threaten to widen the cycle of risks to human rights.

WRITER QUESTIONS MUBARAK'S REMARKS ON MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD

Labor Party member Mahfuz 'Azzam, in an approximately 1,500-word article on page 5 entitled "President

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Mubarak, the State Security Prosecution Office, and the Muslim Brotherhood" refutes the accusation made by some state officials against the Muslim Brotherhood [MB] that it supports terrorism. He refers to President Mubarak's remarks to THE NEW YORKER in which he accused the MB of being responsible for the violence in Egypt. He points out that the investigations that the State Security Prosecution Office is conducting with a number of the union leaders reveal the "real goals behind the campaign led by the president, the interior minister, and all the regime and media agencies against the MB." He points out that according to a report published in AL-AHRAM on 31 January, the state is accusing the arrested MB members of holding a meeting on 19 January in which they called for "backing the candidates in the coming elections as one of the methods of struggle and jihad for the establishment of the Islamic state" and for providing financial support for some candidates in the Teachers Association's elections. Noting that this accusation runs contrary to public freedoms as recognized by the Constitution, 'Azzam adds that such accusations could apply to all political parties and all political activity in the country. He notes that the State Security Prosecution Office has no right to question the legality of the MB, considering that the decision to dissolve it is now being challenged before the Higher Administrative Court, adding that the group's presence is at the least a "de facto" presence. He explains that the accusation shows the "weakness" of the regime and its fear of facing the "Islamic alliance" in the coming elections. 'Azzam concludes that it is unacceptable for the president to accuse the MB of seeking power since gaining power through elections is a democratic practice and only the people have the right to choose their representatives.

CAIRO SUMMIT'S IMPLICATIONS FOR ISLAMISTS VIEWED

Labor Party Secretary General 'Adil Husayn, in an approximately 3,500-word article on page 5, sees the quadripartite Cairo summit, grouping President Mubarak, Jordan's King Husayn, Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasir 'Arafat, and Israeli Prime Minister Rabin, as a "serious retreat" by the government in the face of external pressure. He notes that following a short-lived change in the official media tone toward highlighting the military and economic threats that Israel poses to the region, the government, by hosting this summit, has "dropped all its reservations regarding the Zionist-U.S. arrogance, has disregarded all its warnings, and has declared to everyone that it made a mistake and repented and that it will give in to all that has happened and is happening at the hands of America and Israel." He points out that despite its military superiority over the Arabs, Israel "is watching the Islamic awakening with extreme panic." He explains that Israel is using its current military edge over the Arabs to "infiltrate the Arab and Islamic communities under the name of peace and welfare to stir up seditions and rifts and to plan its economic hegemony over these communities under the protection of the United States." He points out that Israel is facing a real dilemma in Palestine, where it is engaged in a confrontation with martyrdom-seeking people who "love to die" and against whom it cannot use "atomic bombs." He points out that the Cairo summit's condemnation of terrorism without specifying the definition of terrorism was a deliberate attempt to confuse "acts of armed violence against the Israeli occupation" with "acts of violence inside the Arab states." He notes that the government in Egypt does not differentiate between these two types of confrontation and believes both involve the same battle against "Islamists." He adds: "I fear that there are some people who believe that if the external quarters could be convinced that striking at all the ranks of the Islamic movement were a necessity, this would up the price of the Egyptian Government in the eyes of the United States. For if such a target is set, the role of the Egyptian Government in attaining this target would be bigger and more important than that of Israel." This, he adds, could justify the continuation of external aid, for instance. Proof of this, he says, is the recent arrests against the Labor Party members and MB figures. Concluding, Husayn says that the regime's retreat before the "Zionists" and the Americans serve as evidence that "unseating the National Democratic Party from power has become a mission that cannot await further delay, if Egypt is to be spared imminent disaster, God forbid."

NATO ADOPTS ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISM AS NEW ENEMY

Muhammad Jamal 'Arafah, in an approximately 1,200-word report on page 8, says that newly appointed NATO Secretary General Willy Claes has defined "Islamic fundamentalism" as NATO's new enemy. Claes has told a German paper that Islamic extremism represents a threat to the West as much as Communism did and advised the Westerners not to underestimate this threat. 'Arafah points out that the serious thing about Claes' remarks is that he calls for "wiping out" the Islamists and denying them the right to practice democracy. In his remarks, Claes noted that he had started informal contacts with some Arab states to discuss ways to confront the challenges of fundamentalism. The report adds that among the methods being studied to help the Arab regimes face the rising activity of the Islamic movements is to broaden the security and intelligence cooperation and to restrict the right of political asylum given to Islamists in the West. In conclusion, 'Arafah adds: "The danger about the NATO secretary general's remarks last week stems from the fact that his statement was the first official declaration of war against the Islamic forces."

SCHOLAR SAYS BUILDING INDIVIDUALS TAKE PRECEDENCE

Islamic Scholar Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi believes that building truly Muslim individuals takes precedence over building societies and that changing the "self" comes before changing the "regimes and institutions." In an

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approximately 2,000-word article on page 9, al-Qaradawi says that any social reform or change starts with individuals, who provide the core for sound Islamic societies. Al- Qaradawi points out that bringing up a truly faithful generation "qualified to carry the banners of reform and rebirth must precede any call for armed jihad to change the community and establish a state." This is not to underestimate the value of jihad, but in the order of priorities, proper upbringing and education take precedence, he adds.

Gulf Countries React to Marja'iyat Issue in Iran

95LH0058A

[FBIS Editorial Report] The following Arabic-language dailies report the death of Iranian Grand Ayatollah 'Ali Araki and that his death has intensified the debate on the selection of the next marja' (source of emulation): Muscat AL-WATAN on pp 1, 8, Doha AL-'ARAB on pp 1, 12, Kuwait AL-WATAN on pp 1, 24 (1 December); Doha AL-SHARQ on p 1, Doha AL'ARAB on p 1, Kuwait AL-WATAN on p 1 (2 December). For instance, AL-SHARQ reports that "Araki's death has accelerated the internal debate in Iran, already ongoing for months, over his succession in the marja'iyat [institution of the source of emulation] position."

A Break from Tradition, A Major Issue

The major issue discussed by the papers is the decision on whether to encompass in one person both political and religious leadership—the holding of a political post along with the position of marja'iyat.

AL-ARAB (1 Dec) states that "through the centuries, the top Shiite authority has not held any government posts, but after the Islamic revolution in Iran, one person has maintained religious leadership and power at the same time." The paper is more specific the next day, stating that "through the centuries, no supreme religious leader has held government posts. But when the late Ayatollah Khomeyni came to power with the advent of the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979, a single individual assumed the religious leadership and power at the same time."

Muscat AL-WATAN reports that "The Qatari News Agency [QNA] correspondent in Tehran says that Araki's death has brought up the issue of the supreme marja'iyat anew, as Shiite circles, especially in Iran and Iraq, are not in agreement with the major centers of the Shiite theological seminaries on who will succeed Araki, who had the title of supreme marja'. He was the last of the group of historic religious leaders who were contemporaries with the spread of the influence of theological seminaries in the Iranian city of Qom, the second most important Shiite center after al-Najaf."

This daily also states that "QNA has learned that the Seminary in Qom and a group of Qom Seminary Theologians began intensified meetings, the night before last, after the announcement of Ayatollah Araki's death, in order to emerge with a unified opinion on the religious leader who would be named by Iran.

"The QNA correspondent said that if that were to occur, it would not mean that the Shiite establishment has settled on one specific religious leader. Persons closely involved with the affairs of the marja'iyat believe that it will be divided into small maraje' [plural of marja']."

AL-ARAB (1 Dec) states that "the senior Shiite clergy are now engaged in closed-door consultations in the Shiite holy city of Qom, and in Tehran, discussing the conferring of that title. It is becoming clear from what has been disclosed of these discussions that there is a lack of agreement on a successor to Araki and feelings of a threat to Iran's religious interpretations from political enemies."

Opposition to Selection of 'Single Spiritual Leader'

Kuwait AL-WATAN (2 Dec) and AL-SHARQ both report on opposition to the combining of the political and religious leadership. AL-SHARQ points out that "the post of marja' has been given to the most pious clergymen and the most learned in Islamic jurisprudence. The religious, social, and moral Islamic legal rulings made by the marja'-e taqlid take on dimensions that go far beyond the legal rulings of the other ayatollahs in the Shiites' two holy cities, Qom south of Tehran and al-Najaf in Iraq. Many Shiites follow in their daily lives the teachings enjoined by the marja', the highest Shiite religious authority. They rely on this tradition and the tradition providing for the relative independence of the clergy from political authority. A large number of clergymen, especially traditionalists, do not approve of the idea of a 'single spiritual leader' in the political and religious arenas." Kuwait AL-WATAN (2 Dec) adds that "relying on the tradition providing for the relative independence of the clergy from political authority, a large number of clergymen, especially traditionalists, do not approve of the idea of a 'single spiritual leader' in the political and religious arenas."

Muscat AL-WATAN uses similar language: "This important post is occupied by the most pious and scholarly clergymen. The religious, social, and moral Islamic legal rulings made by the source of emulation take on dimensions that go far beyond the legal rulings of the other ayatollahs in the Shiites' two holy cities, Qom, south of Tehran, and al-Najaf in Iraq. Many Shiites follow in their daily lives the teaching enjoined by the marja'."

Kuwait AL-WATAN (2 Dec) reports that "Hashemi-Rafsanjani,...[FBIS ellipses] informed sources said, supports the candidacy of Khamene'i as one of the maraje', but not as an absolute religious leader."

Support for Khamene'i as 'Single Spiritual Leader'

Papers report that there is considerable support, especially in Iran, for 'Ali Hoseyni Khamene'i as marja'. Kuwait AL-WATAN (1 Dec) reports that "reliable

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sources confirmed to AL-WATAN that those close to Khamene'i have begun to treat him like the supreme religious leader. That seemed clear yesterday in a message of condolences the head of the Judiciary Branch Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi cabled to Khamene'i, in which the terms he used revealed Yazdi's insistence on adopting the marja'iyat of the leader of the revolution. Observers also noted that Iranian radio and other media aimed outside Iran in languages other than Persian have since yesterday been treating Khamene'i as a marja' and giving him the title Grand Ayatollah. One student organization went further than giving Khamene'i the title of Grand Ayatollah, using the title Iman Khamene'i, confirming that there are those promoting his marja'iyat."

Muscat AL-WATAN states that "student organizations have issued statements calling for the merging of rule by religious jurisconsult [velayat-e-faqih] with the supreme marja'iyat—in effect adopting the marja'iyat of Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i."

AL-ARAB (2 Dec) and Kuwait AL-WATAN (2 Dec) report that Radio Tehran's English service had alluded to Khamene'i several times on 1 December using the title "Grand Ayatollah."

AL-SHARQ reports that "a large number of religious officials regard it as essential that the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah 'Ali Hoseyni Khamene'i, 55, who now occupies the highest political post, take up the duties of the Shiite religious leaership. When asked, a large number of clergymen in the regime and influential professors mentioned Khamene'i as successor to Araki."

AL-ARAB (2 Dec) and Kuwait AL-WATAN (2 Dec) indicate that "a number of religious leaders were quoted yesterday as saying that Khamene'i ought to become the source of emulation. Ayatollah Morteza Banifazl told seminarians in Qom that Khamene'i, 55, was qualified to become 'the supreme religious authority in Iran.' The head of Iran's Judiciary Branch, Mohammad 'Ali Yazdi, addressed Khamene'i using the title 'source of emulation.'"

Kuwait AL-WATAN (2 Dec) further quotes Banifazl as telling seminarians in Qom that "Khamene'i's succession would strengthen the standing of the regime, while Ayatollah Ja'far Karimi, who was one of the pillars of legal advice in the time of Imam Khomeyni, praised Khamene'i's marja'iyat without reservation. Rasti-Kashani, a member of the seminary and of the group of Qom Theologians, explained the particulars supporting the recourse to Khamene'i in nongovernmental issues, and reaffirmed that Khamene'i should be followed in all that relates to state affairs and the rule by religious jurisconsult, with the admissibility of recourse to others in matters of faith unrelated to the government or the rule by jurisconsult. Kashani preferred, however, turning to Khamene'i on these matters on a 'first opinion' basis.

"Iran has begun to deal with this objective in quiet steps. It has started to precede Khamene'i's name with the title Grand Ayatollah, in order to promote his marja'iyat without agitation. Tehran's evening newspapers have carried letters from Shiite clergy in Kashmir seeking Khamene'i's ruling in legal questions. Informed sources confirmed to AL-WATAN that some members of Hizballah in Lebanon have followed Khamene'i and have published a book entitled *Pearls of Benefit from Following the Leader*. This is a collection of legal rulings in various issues, given by Khamene'i in response to questions that sources at his office told AL-WATAN came from his Arab followers, not Iranians.

"It is the custom among the Shiite public for the religious leader to publish his reference book of legal rulings, though that is no longer a condition in religious exegesis and the marja'iyat, as there are other channels of communication between a religious leader and his followers. Khamene'i's office, however, intends to publish his legal opinions in addition to what Hizballah has done in Lebanon."

However, the TEHRAN TIMES, according to AL 'ARAB (1 Dec), "has quoted Ayatollah Jannati as saying that Khamene'i 'has refused the title time and again when it was offered to him.'"

Iranian Regime's Concerns

According to AL-WATAN (Kuwait 2 Dec), "sources in Qom confirm that there has been an intensified call for the marja'iyat for Ayatollah Montazeri, who was isolated by Imam Khomeyni in the 1980s, and for Ayatollah Mohammad Shirazi, who has liberal political views."

AL-ARAB (1 Dec) points out another concern, stating that "the death of Grand Ayatollah Mohammad 'Ali Araki poses hard questions for the Shiite leadership in Iran" and that "a high-ranking Iranian official said last month that Iran's enemies were plotting for there to be a spiritual leader of the Shiites outside Iran, with no political role, in an attempt to weaken Tehran's authority among Shiites. Some Iranian mullas have demanded that any ayatollah have a clear political role and that he be based in Iran." AL-ARAB (1 Dec) and Kuwait AL-WATAN (1 Dec) report: "Ayatollah Jannati warned, in his Friday sermon, that enemies were plotting to appoint a nonpolitical source of emulation outside Iran and incite him against the Islamic Republic. Speaker of the Majles Hojjat o-Eslam 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri said that 'any person who believes in the separation of religion and politics is unqualified to become source of emulation. We understand that clergymen outside of Iran believe in the need to separate religion from politics.' He was referring to the Shiite clergy of al-Najaf, Iraq, such as Ayatollah Muhammad Husayn Sistani, former student of the late Grand Ayatollah Abolqasem Kho'i. Kho'i, who died in 1992, was keen to avoid politics, which drew public attacks on him in the press on some occasions."

Muscat AL-WATAN reports that "some circles in Iran seek to build a marja'iyat of clergymen in Iran considered to be on the conservative religious right wing, and

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they have suggested such names in Qom as Behjat and Vahid Khorasani, Javad Tabrizi, and Ayatollah Fazel Langarani, in an attempt to prevent a new return of the marja'iyat to Iraq. Iraq is the home of many of the elite clergymen nominated to succeed the supreme marja', which is the Shiite sect's highest rank and religious authority."

Support for Other Pro-Iran Candidates

According to the papers, there is support for candidates, other than Khamene'i, who are pro-Iran.

Kuwait AL-WATAN (1 Dec) states that "the 'Militant Clerics Association' in Tehran has chosen a group of ayatollahs loyal to the Iranian regime and resident in Qom in order that the people might choose the most advanced of them as supreme authority. It is expected that the Qom Theologians would announce the names of those it considers best qualified to assume the supreme Shiite marja'iyat." AL-SHARQ and Kuwait AL-WATAN (2 Dec) report that "The powerful 'Militant Clerics Association,' however, last week submitted a list of the names of several candidates for the position, and Khamene'i's name was not among them. It mentioned Ayatollahs Vahid Khorasani, Mirza Javad Tabrizi, Fazel Langarani, Musavi Zanjani, and Naser Makarem-Shirazi."

Muscat AL-WATAN reports, "Some circles in Iran seek to build a marja'iyat of clergymen in Iran considered to be on the conservative religious right wing, and they have suggested such names in Qom as Behjat and Vahid Khorasani, Javad Tabrizi, and Ayatollah Fazel Langarani, in an attempt to prevent a new return of the marja'iyat to Iraq. Iraq is the home of many of the elite clergymen nominated to succeed the supreme marja', which is the Shiite sect's highest rank and religious authority."

Support for Behjat

Muscat AL-WATAN reports that, though "Iranian factions are now taking action to promote the marja'iyat of Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i,...[FBIS ellipses] [he] has said that he 'is not seeking it.'" It also states, "Informed sources say that Khamene'i supports the candidacy of [Ayatollah Mohammad Taqi] Behjat."

Several dailies report on support for Ayatollah Behjat specifically. AL-ARAB (2 Dec) states, "Observers yesterday said that the fact that the funeral prayers for Iranian religious leader Mohammad 'Ali Araki, who was buried in Qom yesterday, were performed by Ayatollah Mohammad Taqi Behjat, confirmed that Araki's family and Iranian officials supported Behjat's marja'iyat against the other names that have come up in Iran.

"Informed sources have told the QNA correspondent in Tehran that Leader of the Islamic Revolution 'Ali Hoseyni Khamene'i invited 'Ali Behjat to publish his reference book of legal rulings on all subjects, a work of jurisprudence that generally links a legist and his adherents.

"The correspondent said that funeral prayers for the late religious leader, in the presence of Khamene'i and President Hashemi-Rafsanjani confirmed a preference for Behjat to assume the marja'iyat in accordance with prevailing tradition among the Shiites, whereby 'the new religious leader says the funeral prayers of the former religious leader.'"

Palestinian Affairs

Sha'th Interviewed on Washington Talks

MM1402122895 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 13 Feb 95 p31

[Interview with Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of planning and international cooperation in the Palestinian Authority, by Husayn Hijazi prior to Sha'th's departure for Washington to attend the Egyptian-Jordanian-Israeli-Palestinian ministerial meeting scheduled for 13 February; place not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Hijazi] What made you decide at the last moment to attend the Washington meeting?

[Sha'th] I must admit that the decision to go to Washington was a difficult one. Following the failure of the quadripartite summit conference in Cairo and the recent meeting between 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, we stopped to think about the futility of going to Washington and many questions were raised and the answers to them seemed difficult.

[Hijazi] Were contacts made with you, by the Americans, for example?

[Sha'th] Numerous contacts were made in the last hours. We were contacted by Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa, Jordanian Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti, President Husni Mubarak's adviser Usamah al-Baz, as well as the Russian envoy Posuvalyuk who came to see 'Arafat. The Americans contacted the Russian envoy twice during his meeting with Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat]. Denis Ross contacted us three times and [Secretary of State] Christopher also contacted us.

Finally during a lengthy telephone conversation between Christopher and Abu 'Ammar, the U.S. Secretary of State stressed the importance of the Palestinian delegation's attendance at the Washington meeting so that each side could put its case.

Finally, it was decided that we would attend. 'Arafat called an urgent meeting of the Council of Ministers and individually contacted those ministers who had been away and acquainted them with the contacts that had taken place. So we decided that the Palestinians should not keep away from such an important high-level meeting.

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[Hijazi] Have there been any differences or conflict of views among members of the Palestinian Authority in regard to the agreement to attend the Washington meeting?

[Sha'th] Except for a reservation by Abu 'Ammar and a couple of other ministers, there was unanimity on going to Washington and fighting [for our cause] there.

[Hijazi] Have you received any promises as a result of the contacts made by the two sponsoring powers?

[Sha'th] The main promise was that they would support the negotiations. They said that they will support the decision to lift the blockade around the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and the closure [of Israel against Arab workers from the West Bank and Gaza]. But they told us also that these matters should be discussed during the meetings because they can only be resolved in the presence of all the parties. I cannot say, however, that these promises were firm ones, because they were promises of support and not of decision. Finally, we decided that we must not create a precedent for having such high-level meetings taking place in our absence.

[Hijazi] We have witnessed in the past few days a "flood" of meetings unfamiliar to the Middle East, all of which represent precedents in their levels such as the quadripartite meeting in Cairo, the Taba ministerial meeting, and finally the Washington meeting. But the negotiations seem to be sinking deeper and deeper in crisis more than at any time before. Are we witessing an escalation of the crisis as a prelude to a breakthrough or are we witnessing a genuine crisis?

[Sha'th] I believe that we are facing a genuine crisis. All the current efforts are aimed at moving the negotiations out of the deadlock and crisis and giving them a push forward.

The crisis lies in the difficulties and restrictions inherent in the nature of the phased accord. The philosophy behind the transition agreement was based on the following formula: Palestinian rights would be regained step by step, and through the same progression, the Israelis would secure their demands for security also step by step, that is, one step of land in return for one step of security. This was meant to create mutual confidence between the two sides which would enable them to overcome the difficult issues gradually, until the final solution was reached. The most difficult issues namely Jerusalem, the refugees, and the settlements were left to be tackled in the final solution. But what has actually happened was that instead of creating mutual confidence during the transitional period, we have arrived at a completely opposite situation, that is a situation of mutual distrust.

We feel that the Israeli side has been lagging in drawing a timetable for implementing the things it is required to do, and that it is bent on tying everything to security and resorting to methods of collective punishment, in what could be described as an exaggerated disproportionate response to the incidents that take place.

We feel that we have not obtained what is essential for us in the transitional period, namely, the stopping of settlements, the redeployment of the Israeli forces in the West Bank, and the release of our detainees. On the other hand, the Israelis feel as though they have been deceived, for not achieving the security they wanted—indeed, the number [of Israelis] killed following the peace accord has surpassed the number killed prior to it, particularly as the Islamist opposition has been announcing these operations from Gaza [thus claiming or implying responsibility for them] and have been holding celebrations about them without being met with the firmness the Israelis expected the Palestinian Authority to show.

Thus there is a problem. The Israelis presumed that we should act differently and would adopt deterrent measures against the Islamists, that is, exercise deterrence on behalf of the Israelis. But, on the other hand, we have felt and continue to feel that the political method and not the security method was the better method for resolving the problem. In other words, the Israelis should give us greater political and economic support thereby making the masses feel the advantages of peace and leading the Palestinian masses themselves into a situation which would prompt them to exert pressure on the Islamist opposition and on all the forces that seek to undermine the peace process. This would in turn create a climate of pressure that would permit the halting of the operations that threaten Israel. In fact, we—both sides—have failed.

[Hijazi] At such times, do you think that it was wrong to accept the phased solution formula or that a different formula should have been thought of?

[Sha'th] Throughout the Washington negotiations, we sought a final solution, then came the announcement of the Oslo Accord which brought the phased solution. I was not responsible for the Oslo Accord and I knew nothing about it except at its end. Yet I cannot direct any blame to those who negotiated the Oslo Accord. For in the final analysis it seemed evident that without the acceptance of the phased solution, we would not have managed to get hold of the beginning of the thread. Despite our two years' experience in Washington, we could not get hold of the beginning of the thread and we obtained nothing in Washington.

Thus the choice open to us was not between accepting a final solution and accepting a transitional solution. The question open to us then was whether to agree to set foot on Palestinian soil or remain in the diaspora, under blockade and exile, until we get a better chance in the future. We chose the first option.

[Hijazi] Do you feel that the opposition Islamist movement did not give you a chance or time to continue with your practical course?

[Sha'th] There is no doubt about that. Our opposition did not give us a chance. The other side [the Israelis] did

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not give us a chance either. The opposition did not adhere to the cessation of military operations against Israel with whom we had entered into a peace process. It did not even give us the opportunity to put forward at least the argument that we cannot control the opposition's operations because they do not emanate from our areas, due to the opposition's insistence on declaring its operations in Gaza. No Arab state, including Syria, would permit, in periods of peace, the staging of operations through its territories. Hence it cannot be said that our demand for an opportunity [from the opposition] was not a fair demand and that our extreme care for national unity and our genuine fear of the outbreak of civil war have been the Achilles' heel which made us overanxious not to touch this unity in any form whatsoever and prevented us from dealing with those who have been violating the peace process.

[Hijazi] You said that you are going to Washington despite your pessimism so as not to leave the arena free [from you]. What do you expect to gain from going there?

[Sha'th] We want a clear pledge that the peace process will continue and that the Israeli forces will be redeployed in the West Bank thus paving the way for Palestinian elections. We also want a true halting of settlements, the ending of the closure [of Israel to Palestinian workers], and the release of the detainees.

These are our demands. We admit that Rabin is also facing difficulties. Perhaps there is a difficulty in reconciling our demands and theirs. But I believe there is a need to find a way out, otherwise we will be moving to a worse situation than the one we find ourselves in now.

Paper Terms Washington Meeting 'Important Step'

TA1402162295 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 13 Feb 95 p 11

[Editorial: "A Positive Step Awaiting Practical Translation"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Renewing the commitment to the peace process; advancing the talks on the various tracks toward the achievement of a comprehensive peace; reaffirming the commitment to the implementation of the Oslo accord, including preparing the ground for the redeployment of Israeli forces outside Palestinian population centers in the West Bank and for holding Palestinian general elections; and emphasizing the importance of security and its impact on the political process constitute the most prominent points agreed upon at the Palestinian-Egyptian-Jordanian-Israeli meeting held yesterday in Washington with the highest-level U.S. participation.

Definitely, this development represents an important step toward overcoming the many obstacles and difficulties impeding the peace process, especially since the United States has apparently finally realized that the entire peace process is now facing a crossroads and that continuing with the same old negotiating mechanisms will not achieve much progress amid the escalation of differences and the accumulation of obstacles and amid the absence of the presumed role of the peace process' cosponsors, specifically the U.S. role.

From this premise, although the affirmations that emanated from the Washington meeting did not differ in substance from the affirmations and results of last week's first quadripartite Arab-Israeli summit in Cairo, the new thing in this development is the affirmation by the United States itself about its commitment to advance the peace process and to help directly and actively in translating this commitment into a new move to break the current deadlock and extricate the peace process from its impasse.

The experience of the talks throughout the more than three years since the Madrid conference has proved, however, that the various pledges, commitments, and guarantees have differed from what has been taking place, whether in the negotiating arenas or on the ground. From this premise, what the peace process will witness during the upcoming few weeks will constitute the only criterion and serious test of the nature of the new U.S. affirmations on the one hand, and of the Israeli promises to respect the agreements and advance the peace process on the various tracks, on the other.

If the numerous meetings that the peace process has witnessed and is witnessing are not the aim but a means for serving the goal of achieving a just and comprehensive peace, it is premature to talk about a qualitative leap before seeing the practical translation of the Washington meeting's results and before verifying the credibility of the new promises, the importance of which we do not deny and which we regard as a step in the right direction.

In conclusion, we hope that the spirit of the basic points affirmed at this meeting will be translated into a practical reality the impact of which will be reflected on all the peoples of the region, particularly in terms of security, stability, and the aspiration for a genuine peace. Only in this way can the signs of optimism be enhanced and a real breakthrough in the peace process be realized.

West Bank, Jerusalem Awqaf Council To Be Formed

TA1402141695 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 13 Feb 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Palestinian sources have said that the authority is conducting intensive consultations with a view to setting up a Palestinian awqaf council that will be authorized to adopt all decisions pertaining to the Islamic awqaf in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

The sources also told our correspondent Kayid Zahir that the Ministry of Awqaf in Amman has unexpectedly

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summoned Shaykh 'Azzam al-Khatib, head of the Jerusalem awqaf, to Amman to discuss recent developments related to the awqaf and Islamic holy shrines in East Jerusalem and to consult on the issue of this year's pilgrims.

Jihad Figure Says Political Settlement Fragile

NC1402195295 Beirut AL-DIYAR in Arabic
6 Feb 95 p 5

[Interview with Abu-Hasan Taysir, one of the "prominent leaders and founders" of the Islamic Jihad movement, by Ghassan Wahbah; place and date not given—first two paragraphs are AL-DIYAR introduction]

[FBIS Translated Text] The "Islamic Jihad" movement, as defined by one of its most prominent leaders and founders, is a Palestinian Islamic movement, concerned with general Islamic wellbeing. It adopts jihad and armed struggle as a way of liberating Palestine. It was founded in the eighties and has extended its actions to include numerous cultural, intellectual, political, and military activities. It has played a big role in reviving the Islamic public in Palestine and attracting cultured Palestinian youths to the Islamic concept of the anti-Israeli struggle. This is the core of its strategy, which it views as the most effective type of action. It is the closest Palestinian faction to Iran. Its military operations are generally of a special quality and painful.

AL-DIYAR sought to explore the movement's attitudes, steps, and policy through a meeting with one of its prominent leaders and founders, Abu-Hasan Taysir.

[Wahbah] The Palestinian opposition, of which you are a part, has no political platform. What then is the usefulness of the military operations that are being carried out? What obstacles prevent the formation of a nationalist front?

[Taysir] A political platform means that one has demands and submits demands. Ever since the intifadah started it has lacked political demands. The reason is this: When you make political demands in the context of the current Palestinian political atmosphere, this means you will be dealing with the occupation in one way or another. This is the dilemma involved in having political demands. To start an intifadah and then submit political demands means accepting the facts and dealing with the Israeli presence in Palestine as a legitimate presence. The Islamic movement's (Hamas and Islamic Jihad) ideological posture does not permit it to undertake political action that involves making demands. This would demean the Palestinian cause. This is my answer to the first part of the question. As for the other part, involving the circumstances preventing the formation of a broad nationalist front opposed to the Zionist scheme, this can be explained using several reasons. Notable among them is that the platforms of the factions opposed to the political settlement vary in their maximum and minimum demands. Some of these factions demand the liberation of the whole of Palestine. Others accept dealing with an interim solution. This difference in the platforms of the opposition factions causes confusion when attempts are made to adopt unified decisions or to carry out unified action. Although the factions lack a formal nationalist platform, such a platform exists inside the occupied territories in the minds of the public. The factions might not even be the most important component of this broad platform. This illustrates that the opposition to the political settlement is a popular attitude, not merely the attitude of the factions.

[Wahbah] How long can the public resist the tide of the hostile political scheme that is expanding, particularly after the signing of the Israeli-Jordanian and 'Arafatist-Jordanian agreements?

[Taysir] The momentum of the political settlement comes from the considerable international and Arab support for it. These parties portray the political settlement plan as able to stand on its own two feet. But taken by itself the plan is fragile. An examination of the Palestinian public's attitude to the political settlement will show us that opposition to it is growing stronger daily. You are doubtless aware of the public opinion polls that show decreasing support for the Oslo Agreement. This political settlement is therefore losing its popular support daily. We are faced with an internationally backed, Arab-backed agreement that is rejected by the people inside Palestine. In and of itself the settlement plan is feeble, bound to fail, and cannot remain long in front of any military, security, or political development in the occupied territories. The recent operation in Netanya surprised everyone and confronted them with the political settlement's fragility. The settlement is confronted by a real danger. We heard today about a quadripartite meeting (of Mubarak, Husayn, Rabin, and 'Arafat). They are trying to establish a new alliance to confront those who resist the occupation, reject the political settlement, and who do not possess great resources in their resistance of the settlement plan. These young men possess only their limited military action. But this limited military action is causing alliances to be forged in the region. The political settlement is inherently fragile: internationally backed but popularly rejected. I do not imagine it can survive.

[Wahbah] There is much talk about the growth of political Islam, and this is perhaps due to the presence of politically and militarily active Islamic forces in some countries (Egypt, Algeria). Observers sense some link between these Islamic forces and the American project for the region. Do you agree, and what is your relationship with these Islamic forces?

[Taysir] Perhaps your remark is based on the United States and France adopting different positions toward Algeria. But you cannot say the same thing when it comes to the other Islamic movements in the Arab world. Yes, the Americans and the French have different views of the Algerian situation, but this discrepancy

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proceeds from the American viewpoint that the United States can deal with some Islamic countries but can only oppose other Islamic countries. Likewise, some secular countries in the Arab world have good relations with the United States while others have no relations with it. The Americans are trying to say that they are dealing with the Arab world, whether Islamic or secular. But I think this is untrue. We saw differences between the American and the French positions in Algeria but recently there has been a unified position. Recent statements by the French foreign minister and the U.S. secretary of state were identical.

The United States views Islam in the region from the perspective of its experience with the Islamic Republic of Iran. But the Islamic growth in the region is, in principle, anti-American. The nominal freezing of alleged assets in the United States shows that the U.S. President's decision conflicts with the American Constitution itself and with the logic of America's liberal life. Despite all this, the decision was made, and such decisions aim at harming the Islamic presence in the United States, knowing that the Islamic community there exceeds 1 million.

We believe the United States does not support the establishment of an Islamic government in Algeria or anywhere else. It is trying, within its political differences with Europe, to adopt positions that we believe are only political tactics and maneuvers.

[Wahbah] How do you explain Egyptian President Husni Mubarak's many statements in which he accuses the United States of establishing relations with the Islamic forces operating in Egypt? He said he has evidence.

[Taysir] I do not know the circumstances according to which President Mubarak formulated his opinion. But I believe, based on our comprehensive cultural view, that the United States can never help any Islamic movement in the region reach power.

[Wahbah] How do you view your relations with Iran?

[Taysir] We know that the Islamic Republic is the only Islamic country that opposes the settlement process. According to our analysis, this position is not merely a slogan, because it costs Iran a heavy political price within the new world order. The Islamic Republic expresses the Islamic view toward the Palestine issue and U.S. hegemony. This is shown in the principles of the Islamic revolution. I think that in this world, where Muslims are being persecuted, Islamic movements are being oppressed, and the Palestinian cause is being threatened, every honorable man in Palestine finds relations with the Islamic Republic very important for consolidating rejection of these liquidation projects.

[Wahbah] Let us assume, for the sake of argument, that Iran is given a regional role within the framework of a Middle Eastern order in return for concessions. Many Islamic forces are affiliated with the Iranian project and with Iran, and the Islamic Jihad is one of them. What will the situation of the Islamic forces be in the absence of Iranian support and backing?

[Taysir] I believe that the Islamic Republic has overcome the obstacles it faced initially. The plan was to destroy the Islamic Republic. The United States and the rest of the world now accept the Iranian role because of Iran's weight, position, and geographic and political status. So Iran is allowed to play a regional role, but the American view is that Iran can play a role only in its own immediate area (Afghanistan, Pakistan). The Americans realize that a country like Iran must have a vital role in regional politics. They accept a vital role for Iran in those areas, but not in the Arab region. This is the main point of difference between Iran and the West. The West is telling Iran: Abandon Muslims, abandon the Palestinians, abandon Lebanon, deal with your natural region, do not play a role in Palestinian and Lebanese affairs. But the Islamic Republic is a country of theory [fikrah], and this theory is based on hostility toward hegemony and the antagonism of Israel. If Iran abandons this theory, there will no longer be a reason for the presence of an Islamic Republic. To preserve the Islamic Republic the theory must remain. I can never imagine the Islamic Republic bargaining over this issue.

[Wahbah] Do you bring tidings to the Palestinian people, who are fed up with mere talk, regarding qualitative military operations like the Netanya operation?

[Taysir] I believe that the military operations inside the occupied territory, irrespective of claims of responsibility by the Islamic organizations, are the result of internal interaction. This interaction is normal. Those Muslim youths who believe it is their legitimate duty to resist the occupation would not listen to orders from their leaders if they were to order them not to carry out operations of this kind. These operations are the result of interaction inside the occupied territory. I believe, not in my capacity as a planner and guide inside the Islamic Jihad movement, but in my capacity as an analyst, that many similar military operations will take place in Palestine.

[Wahbah] Will this happen soon? The value of military action lies in its political mission and its timing. All the signs now show that this stage requires such an escalation. In the coming stage will we Arabs stand up and face such an escalation?

[Taysir] From our evaluation and reading of what happened in recent months, we find that there is more than one operation. The value of these operations lay in their being able to defeat Israeli security arrangements. I believe the distinguishing mark of these operations lies not only in their claiming many dead and wounded, but in the mind of the Palestinian, with limited resources, scoring a victory against the Israeli mind, which has great resources when it comes to operational issues. This is the great asset I see in these operations. I believe that the political and psychological results of these operations

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for the Palestinian people will motivate many Palestinian youths, whether they belong to a group or not, to perform such operations, because the Palestinian people in the occupied territories consider themselves to be in a state of war. The settlement was concluded behind their backs and they are not convinced that this settlement exists.

[Wahbah] There are some who say that those who divide the land will divide the people. The Oslo Agreement and the transitional projects that preceded it divided the Palestinian land into two parts. Therefore there are those who see this division politically and as a reality. How does the Jihad movement view it?

[Taysir] I believe it is difficult to divide the Palestinian people because they are the people who, in this century, have been subjected to the greatest number of division and dispersal operations. But all the attempts at division failed to wipe out the Palestinian identity. We still believe that the Palestinian dream is one that all Palestinians share. The Palestinian identity is fine and is getting stronger. The interaction between the Palestinians of 1948 and those of 1967 has been expressive and wonderful.

[Wahbah] The police carried out arrest campaigns among your ranks. The police command announced that the campaign will continue. How long will your patience last?

[Taysir] Among the objectives of the recent operation in Netanya was revenge for the Palestinian policemen who were martyred by the occupation's bullets. As for confrontation between the Islamic movement and the police, we believe that there is a paradox that should be noticed. While there are very real circumstances for a clash, the Islamic movement took care to avoid it. This shows awareness in the Islamic movement in Palestine. The Islamic movement in Palestine is being taunted by the Palestinian police, but our reaction is against the occupation. The Palestinian police cannot start confronting the people. It cannot confront the Islamic movements. Rabin realizes this point. They are trying to pick up a few security threads, but to no avail. The proof of this is that their arrest campaigns are indiscriminate.

[Wahbah] But they announced that during the next few days they will pick up all the security threads and say they have information on this. What do you think?

[Taysir] I believe these allegations require evidence. Every allegation that is not proven practically is a false, baseless allegation. Even if these arrests do take place I believe they will be indiscriminate and will not stop the resistance by our Palestinian people to the occupation.

[Wahbah] Do you have any limits regarding your dealings with the [Palestinian] police?

[Taysir] 'Arafat knows the limits, as does the Islamic movement. 'Arafat and his police cannot overstep these bounds.

Hamas Warns Against Infighting, Rejects Elections

NC1402214595 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 14 Feb 94

[Telephone interview with Ibrahim Ghawshah, official spokesman of Hamas, by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Correspondent] You have warned 'Arafat not to launch a domestic war against the mujahidin. Do you think it is possible that 'Arafat and the ruling Palestinian establishment will be responsive to your warning?

[Ghawshah] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. We have sensed that the Palestinian Authority [PA] is being subjected to repeated pressures particularly in the wake of the Washington meeting and the earlier Erez meeting. These pressures are meant to turn the struggling Islamic forces into targets. It is well-known that Rabin has asserted that support for the peace process has dropped to its lowest level, no more than 30 percent. He wants the PA to tighten its hold on the mujahidin in order to boost his credibility with the Zionist public and raise the percentage of peace process supporters. There have been signs that attempts are being made to exert pressures to achieve the results that are satisfactory to the Zionists and the Americans. Apparently a meeting of the highest level Palestinian security officers was held yesterday. We issue this warning hoping that it will fall on responsive ears. Rabin and Peres, backed by the enemies of Islam, will not rest until they provoke Palestinian infighting. We hope that the [Palestinian] Authority will not submit to these pressures or place obstacles before the strugglers who are carrying out legitimate operations guaranteed by civil and religious laws.

[Correspondent] Sir, Dr. Mahmud al-Zahhar has announced that Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] will boycott the elections that will be held by the local authorities. Other announcements, however, have indicated that Hamas might after all participate in the elections. How can one explain these conflicting statements?

[Ghawshah] Brother, Dr. Mahmud al-Zahhar expresses Hamas' views inside the Gaza Strip. I express Hamas' views abroad. Both of our views are based on the movement's definite stance that it will not participate in the self-rule elections because they are part and parcel of the Oslo Agreement. The proposals made sometimes by the Authority and sometimes by the Zionists are media tactics to attract the Islamic movement and make it participate in these elections. The Islamic movement is aware of these tactics. We might definitely participate in elections carried out among the Palestinians inside the territories and abroad but that are not linked to the Oslo Agreement or any similar plan. Such elections must seek to elect real representatives of the Palestinian people.

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Certainly this prospect does not currently exist. However, we say that the election of a Palestinian parliament representing Palestinians inside the territories and abroad is an important and necessary thing if the world really wants to know what the Palestinians want.

[Correspondent] Sir, the anniversary of the al-Ibrahimi Mosque massacre is with us now. How can we mark this anniversary, particularly inside the occupied territories?

[Ghawshah] The 15th of Ramadan [15 February] marks the passage of a year since the al-Ibrahimi Mosque massacre in which about 30 martyrs fell and hundreds were wounded at the hands of the settlers and with the backing of the Zionist army. Our people inside the territories are marking this anniversary with strikes, demonstrations, and promises backed by oaths to God to continue resisting the occupation and to cling to Muslim sanctities. We declare that the al-Ibrahimi Mosque, and the al-Aqsa Mosque before it, do not belong only to the Palestinian people but to all Muslims. The Muslim nation is therefore required to back the Palestinian Muslim people against this Zionist onslaught, which is no different from the Crusader onslaught against this land 900 years ago. We are confident that endurance, determination, resistance, and jihad will necessarily enable us to purge the holy land from these usurpers, God willing.

[Correspondent] Thank you very much, Sir.

[Ghawshah] Thank you brother.

[Correspondent] May God be with you.

Police Seize Explosives 'Hidden' by Hamas

JN1402191095 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1830 GMT 14 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Major General Nasr Yusuf, commander of the Public Security Force, has stated that the Palestinian police have impounded approximately 200 kg of explosives hidden by the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas. In a statement to the Voice of Palestine this evening, Maj. Gen. Yusuf said: We had received information in this regard a few days ago.

Yusuf said that the police found the explosives at a farm near Khan Yunus, in the southern Gaza Strip, and detonated them by order of President Yasir 'Arafat.

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Algeria

Council Approves Edicts on 'Terrorist' Crimes

LD1302203695 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 13 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] During a public session chaired by the Speaker Abdelkader Bensalah, and in the presence of Justice Minister Mohamed Teguia [title as heard], the Transitional National Council approved a number of draft edicts concerning penal law, penal and pardon measures, and the subject of the profession of interpreter.

The draft penal law specifies a number of punishments proscribed for sabotage and terrorist acts. The second draft law concerns the penal measures which basically aim at unifying the judicial work by including provisions of the edict on combating terrorism and sabotage in ordinary judicial legislation and widening the scope of the investigating judge so that he can at any time or place conduct search and detention operations. Furthermore, minors over 16 years of age may be tried for committing acts of sabotage or terrorism.

The pardon measures that are aimed at tackling the phenomenon of terrorism and restoring reassurance to the sons of Algeria include a number of measures; they include pardoning those who belonged to terrorist groups by not judicially hunting them down if they did not commit any crimes that resulted in death.

Benefits from the pardon measures which are defined constitutionally also include not pursuing people who had in their possession weapons, explosives, or other materials which they handed over voluntarily to the public authorities.

After the approval of these bills, Speaker Abdelkader Bensalah delivered a speech in which he talked about the circumstances through which the country has been living and the activities of the Transitional National Council members under these circumstances. He focused his speech on approving the pardon measures, expressing the hope that these measures will be practiced in the field and that our sons, as he said, would return to the straight path and contribute to construction—their rightful place for construction and not destruction.

Women's Group Says 500 Women To Be Killed Over Ramadan

LD1202175595 Paris Radio France International in French 1230 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Our guest is Zazie Sadou, a spokeswoman for the Algerian Rally of Democratic Women. She knew Fatma-Zohra Ourais quite well, the Algerian teacher who has just been killed. She spoke to Kamel Djaider about her:

[Begin recording] [Sadou] She is well known in El Biar because of the battles she has fought out of solidarity with the people there, the district where she lived. [passage omitted] When fundamentalist terrorists carry out killings, physically or symbolically—they want to kill at a symbolic level—only women are an essential drive in society. In fact they also want to reach the collective conscience so that we say: All right, nothing can be done if they attack women and children. I for one believe that this is part of the strategy of barbarity in the name of Islam in order to gain power at all costs, and they will not have any qualms.

Since the beginning of the month of Ramadan they have put up posters in some towns saying that they will kill 500 women during the month of Ramadan. This threat is to be taken seriously. They will not hesitate to ransack and pillage this country in order to reach their goal. What is sad today is—how will I put it—the fact that there are consultations and that a pact has been signed whereby a pseudo democratic force sits down with the killers, reaches out a hand to them, and shakes hands with them, the better to kill more women and children.

[Djaider] Who are you referring to?

[Sadou] I am referring to the Socialist Forces Front, for instance, which has sat down...[pauses] because it is a democratic force, this is what it claims to be everywhere—which has sat down with the paymasters behind the killings.

[Djaider] With the former single party?

[Sadou] Absolutely, with the National Liberation Front, the better to slit our throats and kill us. I would only like to say that over 14 months, 215 women are officially reported to have been killed. Most are not teachers, most are housewives. They are the ones who top these macabre charts. This has been recorded, but we know that hundreds of women are threatened, kidnapped, or raped every day. This is neither reported nor recorded. [passage omitted]

Islamic fundamentalists, their paymasters, and all their supporters—whether in Bonn, Paris, Rome, or elsewhere—do not want what is best for us. What they want is all of the power for the establishment of a fascist and theocratic state. [end recording]

Journalist Escapes Assassination Attempt

LD1402124495 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 14 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The daily EL MOUDJAHID said that five armed men yesterday morning tried to assassinate journalist Hamid Aberkane in Bouzareah [western suburb of Algiers]. Quoting journalist Aberkane himself, the paper said that he had a miraculous escape.

Ministry Employee, Anti-Islamist Teacher Killed

LD1502093795 Paris LCI Television in French 0900 GMT 15 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] There has been more violence in Algeria. We heard today that a civil servant working for

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the Algerian Foreign Ministry was killed close to his home in the suburb of Algiers on Monday.

The body of a teacher who was an anti-Islamist militant has been discovered one week after his abduction in the southwest of the country.

Security Forces Eliminate Several 'Criminals'

LD1402190595 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 14 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The security services said their forces eliminated 10 criminals in several regions of the country. The security services said their forces on 13 February carried out search operations in Benchaabane, Blida Province, that led to the elimination of five criminals who were hiding in a derelict house. During these operations, the security forces recovered three Kalashnikov rifles, two handguns, a shotgun, a hand grenade, and a communication radio. The security forces also eliminated a criminal in Hussein Dey, another in El Biar, and a third in the Eucalyptus. In addition, the security forces eliminated a criminal in Chlef Province and another in Batna Province.

Zeroual Begins Meetings With Political Figures

LD1402195795 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 14 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Within the framework of reviewing the electoral law and the political aspects connected with the presidential elections, President Mr. Liamine Zeroual received at the presidency today Messrs Ali Kafi, Ahmed Bouchaib, and Mohamed Said Mazouzi.

According to a statement by the presidency, this meeting is considered the start of a series of talks extending over numerous days and including about 30 national figures.

The statement added that national public opinion would be informed of the results of the talks at the conclusion of this series of talks. [passage omitted]

Visa Issue Complicated by Immigration Concerns

Demand for Visas Growing

95AF0046A Paris LE MONDE in French 3 Feb 95 p 11

[Article by Philippe Bernard: "The Number of Visas Granted to Algerians Has Not Stopped Growing"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The increase in violence and the concern by French authorities for preventing illegal immigration are curbing exchanges between the two countries.

Nantes—An elegant gray steel and glass building located anonymously at the edge of a low-rent housing project on the outskirts of Nantes. From now on it is through this discreet annex of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that all the roads of France will pass for hundreds of thousands of Algerians wishing to travel, whether it be to visit relatives, a business trip, or to save one's skin.

Each morning, a load of brown plastic postal tubs arrives at the Algerian Visa Office (BVA). On a daily basis between 1,000 and 1,500 cheap paper envelopes mailed from Algeria are taken out of them. Most of the requests will receive a response within 24 hours. It is a refusal in four cases out of five.

The BVA in Nantes is an administrative anomaly born as a direct consequence of the anti-French violence in Algeria. It was opened last 6 October, two months after the murder of three gendarmes and two officials of the French embassy in Algiers. This attack, coming in the wake of others aimed at consular officials, led France by the end of August to close its three consulates in Algiers, Oran, and Annaba to the public.

For several weeks, the time needed to reconstitute a team in the offices of the subdirectorate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in charge of issuing visas, which had recently been relocated to Nantes, visa requests had stopped being processed, except for some "recommended" Algerians.

The 65 staff members of this "sensitive" administrative office live protected by magnetic access cards and a rule of strict anonymity, including on the telephone. Letters sent to Algeria generally carry a mere flourish without any exact signature. The closeness of events in Algeria can also be felt in the presence, in the middle of a large room, of big sealed mail bags containing the records from the three consulates, which have been brought back home for the agency's use. Flooded by telephone calls from Algerians worried about the handling their requests will get, the BVA does not answer and systematically directs calls to an irritating automatic answering machine.

The only staff member in charge of answering the telephone often spends a half-hour with people at the other end who cry, implore or make threats. "They talk about hunger strikes, petitions, letters to the French president, or LE MONDE," said this person, a consular employee repatriated this past summer from Algeria. "But clearly it's impossible for me to go into the status of a file to someone on the telephone whose identity is never certain and whose line may be tapped."

Other staff members are assigned exclusively to composing replies to the hundreds of supporting letters from well-known figures and elected officials of all stripes that flood into Nantes every day.

Set up in haste, the office seems to have found its cruising speed. Just before Ramadan, a traditionally quiet period, an average of 1,200 daily requests was recorded, whereas last October 3,000 files were opened each day.

The concentration of the visa processing in Nantes reveals the intense need for exchanges between France and Algeria and the stories created by the restrictions

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that have been placed on them. "More and more, Algerians are hesitating before traveling because they lack the financial resources and because of security reasons," the head of the BVA commented. "They know they will have to travel to Algiers or Annaba to pick up their visa and they don't want to show off their ties with a foreign country, something which risks marking them."

Introduced in October 1986, the visas have become an essential instrument in the fight against illegal immigration. Prior to the issuance of the visa, checking into the reasons for the travel, resources, and profession aims explicitly at preventing what in Nantes is called "the migratory risk."

The new procedure for delivering visas by mail, which is more discreet and thus more reliable than the queues waiting in front of the consulates, nevertheless supposes two contacts between the French administration and the Algerian requester: the distribution of the request forms and picking up their visa by the chosen few. Since the closure of the consulates, 500,000 photocopiable forms have been distributed in Algeria in Air France and SNCM [expansion not given] offices. Other copies have been distributed in the wilayas (prefectures), social service agencies, and Algerian universities. "A waste of time," they say, an allusion to the obstacles to departure created by the Algerian authorities, except for members of the nomenklatura (see below).

As a consequence of this situation, a shortage of these forms has developed, feeding a black market for these documents. To try to respond to this, other copies of visa requests have been made available to families in Paris and Marseilles. There are doubts, on the part of the Algerian post office, about the sending of the mail meant ostensibly for the Nantes visa service. But French officials note that 98 percent of those people summoned to pick up a visa do in fact go to the consulates, which indicates a good quality of postal service. The precautions have increased: the Nantes mail is sent out in the envelopes supplied and written in the requesters' handwriting, without any administrative reference.

There remains this essential phrase in the instructions on the requests. "We're dealing with an almost industrial problem and we're working at high speed," those in charge explain. "French citizens have been asked not to travel to Algeria, but Algerians should be able to visit them in France. It's a question of satisfying basic travel needs despite the violence."

Most of the cases are rejected owing to a lack of supporting documentation. So students must have a bank account in France containing at least 25,000 francs. Should even one of the required documents be missing, should the holder of the bank account not match the requester of the visa, should the business visit be attested to by an old letter, the visa will be refused. The applicant will receive a form letter that will not even specify which document or piece of information is missing. It is up to him to understand. From a distance, it is a quasi-impossible mission. Besides, his file, having been found to be incomplete, will have been destroyed.

"Before, people could come back with the required papers. Today you need an impeccable file. Otherwise it's no," a prominent official stated. "We must follow a straightforward procedure in which the human element cannot enter. Locally we took into account the fact that a person was 'favorably known locally.' Distance has made direct evaluation impossible."

After the screening on form, which throws out most of the requests, there is the screening on substance. Files are then consulted to see if there is past criminal history and in particular to "assess the migratory risk." At that point the criterion of resources in France proves to be decisive. A student being accepted by a laboratory at the National Center for Scientific Research [CNRS] or a customer of a French business can look forward to getting a one-month visa. As to "upscale customers," they will enjoy the right to a one-year visa allowing multiple reentries. No reason is even given for rejections. That is the rule when it comes to visas.

Bottom line...the assessment of the file in Nantes will have lasted between 20 and 30 minutes. Barring an electrical blackout in Algiers, next it will take three minutes for the printers at the consulates to generate the label for the visa, for which the information has been sent via computer. An "administrative miracle," they say in Nantes, where the consular employees, traumatized by the murders of three of their number in Algeria, know the price for the continuity of public service.

Requests that give evidence of imminent threat are systematically dealt with by the diplomat who runs the BVA. "In the box marked 'other reason for your trip,' they write: 'I am requesting asylum', or 'I am threatened,' 'my existence is untenable given the current situation.' Sometimes they append a letter stating that they have received death threats, such as a piece of cloth representing a shroud or a dagger drawn on paper." However this sort of mail is still exceptional: fewer than about 10 letters out of 6,000 per week.

At the end of the process, on a daily basis 250 visas are granted in Nantes, in addition to the 200 other visas granted by a "local procedure" in Algeria. This is far from the 2,800 visas issued every day, in peacetime, by the 200 French consular agents based in Algeria.

The risk is that the vise will close even more tightly given the requirement, imposed in January, of housing certificates and the creation of long stay visas that will be issued only after the Interior Ministry has been consulted (LE MONDE, 24 December 1994). These two additional obstacles, created at a critical time in the Algerian situation, are going to increase the confusion since the old forms will no longer be valid as of March, and a tourist visa will no longer allow the bearer to ask for

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territorial asylum in France. The route taken by Algerians fleeing the persecutions, and who want to come and catch their breath on the other side of the Mediterranean, will more closely resemble an assault course.

'I Could Be Trapped!'

"Dear Friend, Following the decisions taken by the French authorities, the French consulates in Algeria are practically shut and the issuance of visas suspended. The former procedure of issuing a visa, speedily, to academics, has likewise been suspended.... I can't bet on there eventually being a future relaxation, especially since my airplane ticket is for 18 September.... So I could be trapped!" The writer of this letter, Abderrahmane Fardeheb, a professor at the Institute of Economic Sciences of Oran, could not imagine the extent to which these lines, written on 29 August 1994, were a premonition!

After he had been invited by the economics department of Grenoble to teach starting on 1 October 1994, the Algerian university professor made an initial visa request at the French consulate in Oran at the end of August. Not getting an answer, he repeated his request in early September. He had no more success, since the consulates were "practically shut down" and the system in Nantes was not yet up and running. It had become impossible, unless you had major "pull," to obtain a visa. This situation would last close to two months. Abderrahmane Fardeheb would not have the time to wait. On the morning of 26 September, as he was leaving his house, he was killed by a bullet in his head.

Visas issued to Algerians by France Since 1987

	(in thousands)
1987 (estimate)	500
1988 (estimate)	700
1989 (estimate)	800
1990	500
1991	400
1992	350
1993	300
1994 (estimate)	100

Just as Algeria is, the other countries of the Maghreb are concerned over the tightening in visa policy.

Visa Access Limited

95AF0046B Paris LE MONDE in French 3 Feb 95 p 11

[Article by Catherine Simon: "The Privileges of the 'Nomenklatura'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Up until last summer, the "visa suitcase" system was operating at full tilt. This open sesame for France, which had been placed at the disposal of the Algerian authorities, under the terms of an accord quietly reached with Paris, allowed most civil servants, employees of ministries, and managers in state-owned companies or those working for a big French company to obtain the precious visa. This system of privileges, operating with French endorsement, offered to those who benefited from it—they were numerous and varied—the assurance of a quick departure far from the fussy checks of the consular services.

"Usually I came to France once or twice a year," said an Algiers white collar worker. "We had very good contacts with the embassy. Any employee, provided he was well regarded by the bosses, could get his visa thanks to the 'suitcase.' For white collar workers it was even easier. You had the right to about 20 visas a month: All you had to do was present your passport, and 48 hours later it was done," he said. The attack on the Ain Allah housing development, on 3 August 1994, would put an end to these practices. The deaths of two gendarmes and three French consular agents who were killed during that commando operation claimed by the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) revealed the extent of the Algerian disaster—and France's vulnerability. Less than three weeks later, on 22 August, the three French consulates in Algeria closed their doors.

Black Market

After that, those requesting visas had to write to Nantes and wait for the answer by return mail. "Just to get the form to fill out you've got to have clout!" they murmur in Algiers. The form to request a visa, which in theory is available to everyone, has become a scarce commodity, to such an extent that a number of Algerians have been forced to buy it on the black market or have it mailed to them from France.

What became of the famous "visa suitcase"? It shrank like a shagreen skin. Unless, on your own or through relatives, you have a "good contact" at the embassy, the era of "easy stamps" has returned. Proof of this comes from this internal telex at the Ministry of Higher Education, dated 20 November 1994, announcing that the "visa suitcase" has been "suspended."

Suspended, but not for everyone. Whereas "teachers and researchers needing to travel to France as part of a course of training, scientific visits, conferences and other scientific meetings," are asked to apply to Nantes, the suitcase "still remains functional" for the upper crust. Only "heads of institutions and other university and research officials" can have access to it, "as part of official missions," the telex adds. Such nicely ordered charity.

Turkish Connection in Germany Examined

95AF0047A Paris LE MONDE in French 4 Feb 95 p 2

[Article by Lucas Delattre: "Germany No Longer Wants To Provide Sanctuary to the 'Madmen of God'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The federal courts have begun a preliminary investigation of two Algerians.

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Bonn—It is May 1994 in Oujda, Morocco. Driving in a Mercedes, two suspects are arrested by police, who discover about 10 submachine guns in a trunk of the car. Tried immediately, Hamaz S. and Omar C., Algerian citizens, are sentenced to 15 years in jail. To all appearances, they had been getting ready to ship weapons to Algeria. Very soon the investigation reached Germany, where the two men had studied.

The German authorities have just looked into this case to try to uncover one of the other Algerian networks operating in Germany. On Monday 16 January the federal court began a preliminary investigation, believing that certain suspects, whose names were known to it, might be prosecuted on account of their "membership in a criminal organization" and for "violating weapons legislation."

The first clues led to "circles that until then had been unknown to the intelligence services," one official explained. It was in the area of Leipzig, in the former German Democratic Republic [GDR], he added, that the suspicions of the federal criminal police (BKA) would focus from then on. Up until then, Algerian Islamic circles had instead been concentrated in the western part of the country (Rhineland, Baden-Wurtemberg), not far from the French border. And if, for several months, Bonn had been aware of the existence of arms trafficking benefiting the Algerian Islamists, they seemed concerned about it only intermittently, there being greater surveillance of Kurdish circles linked with the PKK [Kurdish Workers Party] considered to be a permanent insecurity factor in Germany.

This is what explains in part why certain circles close to the former Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) have always felt protected. The Algerian community—no more than 25,000 people—goes pretty much unnoticed, whereas the 2 million Turks are the first ones who attract police attention. There is one aggravating fact: for a long time the federal justice and police agencies have handed over their responsibilities to the Lander. So Charles Pasqua, in the spring of 1994, was in a fine position to criticize the hands-off attitude of the Bonn authorities with regard to the Algerian "terrorists."

The recent hijacking of the Air France airbus produced a shock wave in public opinion, rekindling the memory of attacks committed by the Red Army Faction in the late 1970s. The ultimatum—whether true or false—sent to several Western embassies in Algiers at the end of December, increased the tension by one notch. The international dimension of the Algerian conflict no longer eludes anyone.

Rabeh Kebir Tapped

The alarming comments by the head of the federal criminal police, Hans-Ludwig Zachert, alluding to the risk of attacks in Germany itself, were widely reported by the local press. "We are following the activities of the representatives of the former FIS on our soil very carefully," said Bernd Schmidbauer, a secretary of state at the chancellery in Bonn, in charge of coordinating the secret services. "Germany is not a sanctuary for Algerian terrorists."

For some weeks now, the surveillance measures to which Rabeh Kebir, the president of the executive agency of the former FIS abroad, has been subject, have been greatly reinforced. The same thing is true for two of the sons of the former president of the "Party of God," Abassi Madani.

Mr. Kebir, who has lived in Germany since 1992, where he acquired political refugee status in February 1994, lives in a small suburban house quite close to Cologne. His telephone conversations have been tapped, which led him to purchase a mobile telephone. His comings and goings are closely watched. And the federal authorities have made it clear to him that if he left German territory he would not be allowed to return again.

In the eyes of the secret service, though, Mr. Kebir cannot be considered a "terrorist." His main activity is limited, in fact, to publishing communiques about the situation in Algeria. Furthermore he is very careful not to associate with the various arms traffickers who try to approach him. The only "retaliatory" measure taken against him, last summer, came after he had launched an appeal for violence: a fine of 5,000 Deutschmarks (17,000 [French] francs).

However Mr. Kebir has been represented by the Algerian authorities as an "operational boss" capable of controlling armed groups locally. By thus exaggerating his importance, he is made into someone weighty—indeed someone indispensable—if the logic of "national reconciliation" were to get underway on the other shore of the Mediterranean. This official rhetoric is all the more disturbing because it has been shown that Mr. Kebir would never have been able to leave his country without the benefit of highly placed protection from within the state. Therefore it is not absurd to wonder whether certain leaders have not wanted, by offering him German exile, to put one "joker" aside for the future.

The Turkish "Godfathers"

The trafficking networks, being more or less close to the former FIS, are taking advantage of Germany's geographic location to cause arms to pass through it, coming most of the time from Eastern Europe. For several months, the indications that this was the case have not stopped mounting.

In May 1994, at the Beaumont toll station (Meurthe-et-Moselle), an Algerian "smuggler" who had been carrying an entire arsenal in the trunk of his car from Germany was arrested.

Two months later, in Perpignan, six people were questioned for being in possession of weapons and munitions. They were traveling in an Audi registered in

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Stuttgart loaned by an Egyptian. In August, an automatic pistol stolen several months earlier from a policeman in North Rhineland-Westphalia during a burglary was discovered by the Algerian police in a stash of recovered weapons.

In any event, the financial resources of the Islamist networks established in Germany do not seem to be huge. According to information available to the German intelligence service, the notion of there being hidden financing through drug trafficking is not well founded. These same sources refer instead to small deals such as the sale of counterfeit Lacoste shirts or the levying of "taxes" on some of the newly arrived Algerian exiles who, at the rate of 250 per month, are knocking on the country's doors.

If contacts exist between the Algerian and Near Eastern Islamic circles (Palestinian or Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] or Hizballah sympathizers), they are very informal ties made during chance meetings, in mosques, and in the country's largest Islamic centers: Aachen, Hamburg, Berlin, etc. On the other hand, the contacts with Tunisian fundamentalists who are close to the underground Islamic al-Nahdah movement are much closer.

The Algerian Islamists are receiving major aid, probably financial, from their Turkish "godfathers," people who are close to Necmettin Erbakkan's Party of Prosperity. The offices of their very powerful association (AMGT [Association for a New World View in Europe]) in Cologne are routinely the place where "professor" Kebir's Islamic theology courses are given. "The Turkish Islamists are very interested in the situation in Algeria," said Udo Steinbach, the head of the Institute of Oriental Studies in Hamburg, considered one of the top specialists on Islam in Germany. "And rightly so! They're pursuing the same goals as the FIS and are agitating for the establishment of an Islamic republic in Turkey."

Arms Trafficking

German leaders recognize that their country has become a transit point for weapons going to Algeria. Their most frequent origin: the countries of Eastern Europe. "Often the arms come from Slovakia, then go through Austria, Germany, Switzerland, France, and finally Spain," a good source stated. Here is one indication from among others: the recent arrest, near Passau, in Bavaria, of a Tunisian suspected of arms trafficking coming from Slovakia, arrested with a false...Polish passport.

Since the collapse of the Iron Curtain, it has become easy to pick up light arms on the black markets of the countries of the former Soviet buffer zone. There is no shortage of middlemen—often former employes of weapons manufacturers. These channels are not unknown to the Algerian Islamists, since an Arabic-language magazine, AL ANSAR, which disseminates the ideas of the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), has sometimes been printed in Poland, where it has a mail box.

The first contacts in the region seem to go back to the end of the 1980s. Having returned from Afghanistan, several dozen men from the Maghreb passed through the countries of Eastern Europe: it cost them less to get a Peshawar-Warsaw plane ticket than it did to go through Frankfurt or Paris. The possibility cannot be ruled out that some of these former "Afghan mujahidin" chose to remain.

Italian Arms Smuggling Network Detailed

95AF0047B Paris LE MONDE in French 4 Feb 95 p 2

[Article by Marie-Claude Decamps: "Mafia Helping the Fundamentalists?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Rome—Might Italy become one of the nerve centers for the Islamist networks in Europe? There are enough favorable conditions for the security services to take the notion seriously. The Maghreb community, though, is not very large: 136,793 people, according to estimates from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 3,793 of these being Algerians. This is recent immigration which goes back, for the most part, to the 1980s.

The case involving the seven Italian sailors whose throats were cut in the Algerian port of Djendjen in July 1994 led to a beginning of awareness on the part of the authorities. The pliability—indeed the permissiveness—of the laws provided favorable conditions for a huge amount of illegal immigration, and it has been greatly underestimated by the official figures. Today a foreigner without papers still has two weeks to regularize his situation.

At a time when the main countries of Europe—France and Germany especially—are tightening their controls, the Italian "exception" very obviously represents a windfall for the Islamist networks.

In addition to the 50 or so officially recognized places of worship, the Muslim community in Italy is organized around two main centers. In Rome, the Islamic Cultural Center of Italy (CICI) and the Union of Islamic Communities and Organizations in Italy (UCOI) help strengthen the image of a "moderate" Islam. In Milan, however, the most turbulent elements of the fundamentalist movement are to be found. A third center, which is still in its embryonic stage, is reported to be growing at the University of Perugia, which is open to foreigners, and where Maghreb Islamists pour through.

The geographic proximity and the permeability of borders, added to the relative don't-care attitude on the part of the authorities, are not the only trump cards from which the Islamist networks can draw. The underground channels used by the Mafia or the Camorra for their smuggling activities could be beneficially "doubled" and be used to ship weapons and munitions to Algerian underground fighters. This is already reported to be the case with several drug-running operations organized by the Naples Mafia and with those used in western Sicily to unload illegal labor coming from the Maghreb.

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The weapons that pass through Italy have generally been purchased—legally—in Switzerland and Belgium. Most come from the countries of Eastern Europe and nearby former Yugoslavia. The routes taken most often defy geographic logic: the case is cited of a network that goes from the Balkans to northern Italy, then from Switzerland into Germany, ending up in Hamburg—and shipping to Algiers.

Thus far no weapon has been seized on Italian territory. The only official "seizure" has been limited to the one of an activist and trafficker, an Algerian citizen, Djamel Lounici, who was brought in for questioning in Milan in November. Thirty-three years old, this former member of the "Brigade of the Oath," a terrorist organization linked to the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), has already been named in two arrest warrants. In particular he is suspected of having taken part in the attack on the Algiers airport in August 1992.

It was in Germany, where he requested political asylum, that Djamel Lounici was first spotted. On several occasions, during routine checks, transmitter-receivers were discovered in the trunk of his car. The young activist then decided to leave Germany with false papers.

Djamel Lounici resurfaced in Switzerland, then, in early 1994, in Italy, where he is being careful not to request asylum. Despite this, in September, he was named in an international arrest warrant issued by Morocco. The Fes court believes he could have supplied weapons of European origin to Maghreb Islamist networks.

In November Djamel Lounici was brought in for questioning—by chance, according to the official version—in a Milan street. While waiting for the Moroccan legal authorities to send the necessary documents to their Italian counterparts, the young Algerian was put in prison.

The Moroccan documents will never arrive and, having no precise charges against him, Djamel Lounici, who is certainly a lucky man, has regained his freedom.

Egypt

Musa Views Peace, 'Terrorism,' Nuclear Treaty

NC1502095495 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0750 GMT 15 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Washington, 15 Feb (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has stated that there are mounting challenges facing the peace process in the Middle East, which is now in a critical phase because of the continuing deterioration on the Palestinian track.

At a meeting with senior American journalists and commentators before leaving Washington today, he explained that this is what prompted President Husni Mubarak to call a quadripartite summit early this month to save the Palestinian track. He said the sensitivity of the peace process is almost entirely concentrated on this track. Therefore the Israeli and Palestinian sides must pursue their efforts and resume negotiations, otherwise things will turn in favor of extremists on both sides.

The foreign minister referred to the recent intense co troversy over terrorism and acts of violence. He said: Terrorism has indeed created a problem but we must realize that there are reasons behind it, as the Palestinians living in the occupied territories and self-rule areas see no progress in any direction.

Musa called for concerted action to solve the existing "great problem" on the Palestinian track. He warned that the lack of progress will mean a direct move backward and that if the Middle East loses its peace process now, it will lose it for a long time to come.

He discussed the existing dispute between Egypt and Israel on signing the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT]. He said: We are supposed to be talking today about a new regional order for the area and that the call for such an order means that problems, be they political, economic, or security, must be raised and discussed at the negotiating table.

He added that an invitation has been addressed to Egypt to participate in signing the renewal of the NPT. He noted: This means we should be committed to this Treaty forever, an issue that has raised questions on the security Egypt will enjoy when it makes such a commitment while it has a neighbor who is not committed to the NPT.

Proceeding from this point, Musa said: If Israel does not sign the NPT, Egypt will then preserve its right to define its stance. He noted that if the commitment to the NPT is universal, this must apply to everyone without exception. He warned that any exception will lead to a nuclear race and to great chaos in the region.

Says No U.S. Pressure To Sign NPT

NC1502101395 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0840 GMT 15 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Washington, 15 Feb (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has denied that the United States is pressuring Egypt into signing the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT]. He said the United States has a view on this issue, just as Egypt has its own view, but there is no pressure of any kind.

Musa was answering correspondents' questions on Egypt's stance on signing the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty ahead of his departure from Washington today.

Interviewed on NPT, Talks With Syria

TA1502121795 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 15 Feb 95 p 9

[Interview with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa by Hayim Shibi in Washington; date not given—first two paragraphs are YEDI'OT AHARONOT]

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[FBIS Translated Text] "We will not sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] while Israel is developing a secret nuclear program a few kilometers from us," Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa stated in an interview with YEDI'OT AHARONOT.

In the talk held in his suite on the ninth floor of the Watergate Hotel in Washington, Musa revealed himself to be sensitive about Israeli public opinion and sought to have Egypt regarded "as a neighbor, not an enemy, even when there are differences of opinion."

[Shibi] Were there any charged moments between yourself and the Israeli foreign minister in the four-way foreign ministers' meeting in Blair House?

[Musa] There were no charged moments, but there were candid ones. Shim'on [Peres] and I are friends. Friendship entails candid conversation and not just pleasantries. Shim'on and I owe as much to each other; to be able to discuss everything candidly and to put the problems on the table.

[Shibi] Israel has announced that it will not sign the NPT in March. Will you sign it?

[Musa] If Shim'on says that Israel will not budge from its position, that will be a pity. We will not budge either. We agreed to look for a compromise that would be acceptable to both sides. There is still time to reach one. I am not talking about a face- saving or perfunctory formula. I am talking about a true formula.

Before we commit ourselves we will have to examine the Israeli nuclear program being carried out on an unknown scope a few kilometers from our southern border. We know nothing about this program, a program that is not subject to international supervision.

[Shibi] What made you remember Israel's nuclear capability?

[Musa] Israel talks about a new era in the region, about a new order. You cannot start a new order just by setting up a regional bank for the Middle East, paving a road, or opening a factory. All these can only materialize within a framework of stability and disarmament.

[Shibi] Do you want to push Israel into a corner?

[Musa] The intention is not to embarrass you or push you into a corner. You are not the enemy, you are our next-door neighbor. Shim'on talks about dangers from Libya, Iran, and Iraq. Do you intend to use nuclear weapons against them? That would be a catastrophe.

[Shibi] They threaten Israel, not Egypt.

[Musa] Iraq is under tight international supervision. Iran is suspected of harboring nuclear ambitions. If you have nuclear ambitions, why shouldn't Iran? Why is it alright for one and not so for the other? Do you have any complaints about the Iranians? Well then, raise them in an international forum and within the framework of international law.

[Shibi] Do you want Israel to disarm?

[Musa] All we want is international supervision of a close neighbor's nuclear ability. The Israeli nuclear program will encourage a nuclear arms race in the region. If you want a nuclear program for peaceful purposes nobody will object. If you do not budge from your position we will not sign, regardless of who pressures us.

[Shibi] If we are talking about a new order, where is President Mubarak? Why does he not visit Israel?

[Musa] The president has said that there is no problem or obstacle with a visit, but that he wants to go to Israel when this makes a real contribution to peace. We have nothing against such a visit in the future. You can expect one.

[Shibi] Is Syria getting closer to the negotiating table?

[Musa] There is tremendous diplomatic activity between the Syrians and the Americans. Additional activity is expected between the Syrians and the Israelis. The Syrians do not believe that a meeting between al-Asad and Rabin is the first thing that must be done. There are other ways to break the ice. Al-Asad wants to see progress before he comes to such a meeting.

[Shibi] Will a Likud government put an end to the peace process?

[Musa] In spite of everything, the peace process is irreversible. Rabin and Peres are doing everything possible. We have some criticism, that is correct, but more or less they are doing everything possible. They are a party and a partner to the talks.

Papers Criticize Israel's Stance on Peace Process

NC1502112095 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0704 GMT 15 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 15 Feb (MENA)—AL-JUMHURIYAH and AL-AKHBAR newspapers have emphasized the need to expedite any talks with the aim of finding a genuine, comprehensive, just, and lasting peace so that all the region's states can benefit from its fruits.

AL-JUMHURIYAH says in its editorial today that Arab efforts must be pursued to force the Israeli Government into submitting to the requirements of a just and comprehensive peace and the complete implementation of the principle of land for peace and into adopting brave measures to remove obstacles and mines facing all tracks of negotiations.

The paper notes that the ordinary citizen is convinced that Israel still seeks to obtain all privileges and wants to take the peace process out of context, which creates prospects for violence.

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The paper says the commemoration of the painful Hebron massacre's first anniversary reflected the flaws that marred the peace efforts, not only in the negotiations between the parties concerned but also among the citizens.

The paper says this is confirmed by the Israeli radio's announcement of establishing a settlement community in the (Kiryat Arba') settlement to commemorate murderer Goldstein, who committed the Hebron massacre, in the presence of Israeli Knesset representatives. This measure, it adds, casts intense shadows on the attempts to create confidence between the Palestinians and Israelis.

Meanwhile, AL-AKHBAR notes that the peace process that began in Madrid 10 years ago has suffered many changes in the Israeli stances, whether at the Washington or the Cairo talks, which greatly slackened the peace process.

The paper says that, although we have not played down the U.S. role in the peace process, we have not seen any tangible results of the role everyone was expecting of the world's strongest and greatest country.

The paper notes that Israel's attention should be drawn to the importance of a speedy and serious effort to establish a comprehensive and just peace so that all the region's states will benefit from it, particularly Israel, which wants to take but does not want to give.

The paper asserts that any hesitation in making decisions to expedite the peace process will cause harm and waste benefits, in addition to raising doubts on the intentions of the party that deliberately seeks to prolong the negotiating process.

Panel Discussion on Nuclear Threat From Israel

95LD0024A Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic
13 Jan 95 pp 54-58

[Report by Dr. Salwa Abu-Sa'dah on a panel discussion in Cairo among Ambassador Mahmud Murtada, deputy assistant foreign minister; Dr. 'Isam al-Din Jalal, president of the African "Pugwash"; former Staff Major General Ahmad Fakhr, the president of the National Center for Middle East Studies; and Dr. Salah 'Amir, director of the University of Cairo's Department of International Law; date not given—first five paragraphs are AL-MUSAWWAR introduction]

[FBIS Translated Text] The countries of the world are due to sign the agreement to extend the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] next April. Israel has so far refused to sign the treaty. Will the Arab states agree to extend the treaty, although Israel still insists on unilaterally controlling and monopolizing nuclear power in the region? Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres has claimed that Israel's possessing of nuclear weapons is only a rumor. While the peace process between the Arabs and Israel is continuing, U.S. Vice President Al Gore might come to the area, carrying an Israeli commitment to sign the treaty.

The differences of opinion regarding Israel's nuclear capability and its possible increase in the future have attracted local, Arab, and international attention. However, the Egyptian and Arab position on the signing of the treaty extension must be decided according to the Arab security concept. Pressure must be exerted on the international community to link the signing of the agreement to extend the treaty with the need for Israel to join this treaty.

This was exactly the opinion of four Egyptian experts who came to the AL-MUSAWWAR offices to answer an important question: Does Israel have nuclear weapons? Since the answer, from the outset, was positive, the debate went on for two hours about Egypt's position regarding Israel's nuclear arsenal and whether it is possible for Egypt to link its refusal to sign the chemical weapons treaty with Israel's refusal to sign the NPT. The experts also tried to answer the questions of how Israel can be forced to sign the treaty, especially as the area is now involved in a peace process requiring a measure of openness and weapons control, and what the legal position is if Egypt refuses or suspends its agreement to sign the treaty until Israel signs the NPT?

The four experts were Ambassador Mahmud Murtada, deputy assistant foreign minister; Dr. 'Isam-al-Din Jalal, head of the African "Pugwash" [as published]; former Staff Major General Ahmad Fakhr, head of the national center for Middle Eastern studies; and Dr. Salah 'Amir, head of the international law department at Cairo University.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres has stated in Alexandria that what is being said about Israel's possessing nuclear weapons is just a rumor. Can Peres be correct in what he said?

[Murtada] The entire world knows that Israel possesses nuclear weapons. Israeli leaders also have admitted that Israel possesses such weapons. On 2 December 1974, former Israeli President Efrayim Qatsir stated: "One of our aims has always been to obtain atomic weapons, and now we have them." In a letter to British Member of Parliament David Cherchin [name as transliterated] on 13 November 1990, Former Israeli President Hayim Herzog noted Israel's nuclear capability. In a lecture he delivered at Haifa University on 5 June 1991, Yitzhaq Rabin confirmed that Israel possesses nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction capable of destroying any country that attacks it. Furthermore, in 1986, Mordekhay Va'nunu, who worked for 10 years at the Dimona nuclear reactor, revealed that Israel has become a nuclear state in every sense of the word. He produced documents and photographs to prove his claim. Perhaps the fact that Va'nunu is still in prison in Israel today confirms that what he said was right. The British JANES magazine published clear photographs taken by Russian

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and French satellites in the past five years, showing the huge Israeli nuclear arsenal.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Why are there contradictory estimates of the Israeli nuclear power? Is there not a figure on which international data centers can agree?

[Murtada] I think that these centers are helping Israel to conceal the truth. However, everyone agrees that Israel has between 100 and 200 nuclear weapons. This figure is widely known.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] How true is this figure?

[Fakhr] Every state that has nuclear weapons also has a special strategy for it. During the Cold War era, the strategy of the big powers was "nuclear deterrence." Israel, however, is using the strategy of "nuclear ambiguity." It refuses to confirm or deny that it has nuclear weapons to keep everyone guessing. I understand Peres's statement as a political signal that can help and benefit Israel in the current negotiations.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] What is the significance of Israel's possessing 100 or 200 nuclear weapons?

[Fakhr] A nuclear bomb today is different from the one dropped on Hiroshima. A bomb today has the capacity of 1.5 megatons. A megaton is 1,000 kilotons. This means that three nuclear bombs are enough to destroy an area like the Urals. Three or four bombs are enough to level a city like Moscow. Military calculations in the nuclear field show that one nuclear bomb is enough to get a small country out of the battlefield and wipe out large areas. Ten bombs are needed to totally paralyze a big country. Two hundred nuclear bombs are enough to destroy any potential enemy of Israel. Mathematically speaking, they are enough to destroy 20 to 22 Arab states.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Although Israel possesses such an arsenal, some Arab analysts think that nuclear weapons are useless. In view of its proximity, Israel itself will not be spared if it uses such weapons.

[Jalal] All signs confirm that Israel possesses more than 200 nuclear weapons. Israel's security concept is based on aggression. The country is governed by the military establishment. Therefore, the existence of nuclear weapons in Israel is dangerous. According to Israel's plans, any fighting should take place outside Israeli territory to minimize human losses. Therefore, if there is a country in the world that possesses nuclear weapons and does not constitute a danger to its neighbors, it is not Israel.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Israel has always stated that it will not be the first to use nuclear weapons. Is this part of its "nuclear ambiguity" policy?

['Amir] Israel's assurances that it will not be the first to use nuclear weapons must not make us overlook the fact that Israel possesses such a huge arsenal. This is at a time when legal obstacles are being placed in the way of neighboring states for possessing such weapons. If, under certain political circumstances, Israel verbally declares that it will not use this weapon, there is no legal guarantee or deterrent that it will not use it if the circumstances change. Therefore, we must have an international guarantee and legal and military deterrent to prevent Israel from using such weapons under any circumstances.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Some states that do not possess nuclear weapons can compensate for this by acquiring chemical weapons. What is the difference between mass destruction and relative destruction, and what is the political effect of this on states?

[Fakhr] In political negotiations, the strength of a state is measured by the weapons it possesses. The German military school thinks that a state is 10 times stronger if it possesses nuclear weapons. The French school, however, distinguishes between weapons of mass destruction and weapons of partial destruction. It thinks that a state is 100 times stronger if it possesses weapons of mass destruction. We cannot talk about peace in the Middle East when Israel possesses 100 times more weapons than the other states. Egypt's position in this regard has been clear and honorable since 1974. Egypt and Iran have proposed an initiative to make the Middle East a nuclear-free zone. In April 1991, President Husni Mubarak suggested that the Middle East be declared an area free of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons. Egypt linked its agreement to sign the treaty for the nonproliferation of chemical weapons with Israel's agreement to sign the NPT.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] What is Ambassador Murtada's opinion?

[Murtada] Israel's possession of nuclear weapons greatly upsets the balance of power in the area. This cannot lead to peace. Israel wants comprehensive peace with all the countries in the area, and then it will discuss the issue of nuclear weapons. This is wrong. How can we establish peace without discussing the issue of armament, foremost nuclear armament? The Arabs must link peace with armament control in the area, foremost nuclear armament.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Can we negotiate with Israel on this matter without clear information about Israel's nuclear strength, without clear intentions, and without knowing whether Israel will stop producing nuclear weapons or not?

[Jalal] There is a difference between chemical and nuclear weapons. The treaty for the nonproliferation of chemical weapons is universal, because the big powers found out that controlling chemical and biological weapons would be difficult. They were afraid that such weapons would threaten them. Therefore, the big powers have been actively trying to ban these weapons and make all countries of the world sign this treaty. The NPT is not universal. The treaty exists, and countries sign it voluntarily. As for clear information, I think that Israel's nuclear strength is known in the world.

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[AL-MUSAWWAR] What we meant is that if Israel had good intentions, it would have allowed inspection and declared what it has, opening the way for the signing of the treaty.

[Jalal] Israel's expansionist ideology and concepts make Israel a source of danger. We have 40 years of experience with Israel. We know its thinking and strategy. Once a view was held that we must offer some concessions and facilities to Israel to make it more trusting and willing to establish peace. However, this proved to be wrong. It made Israel more insistent on its demands. It also made it possible for Israel to achieve, through negotiations, what it wanted to achieve by force. Israel's strategy has not changed. Only the means to achieve it have changed. In light of all this, it is necessary and imperative for us to remove this danger from our area.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] What is Dr. Salah 'Amir's legal opinion?

['Amir] Openness is not the issue here. If Israel possesses nuclear weapons, it is natural that it would try to be ambiguous about it. Legally, the way is totally clear and simple. There is a treaty for the nonproliferation of chemical weapons, which Egypt signed in 1981. It is possible to have a regional treaty for the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons, and this could serve as the basis for the establishment of genuine peace.

[Fakhr] The question of openness is extremely important, at least to prevent war from breaking out by mistake. Forty years of armament control negotiations between the former Soviet Union and the United States proved that openness is necessary for negotiations. In 1991, the United Nations issued a resolution called "international transparency in armament," which was signed by 150 states. When the time came to implement it, Iraq's invasion of Kuwait took place. The United Nations then insisted that Iraq should begin implementing the resolution by revealing the types of weapons it used in the invasion. A debate took place at the United Nations about offensive and defensive weapons, and with which Iraq should begin its cooperation. The United Nations then invented the term "weapons that upset the balance." These are the weapons of mass destruction. Until today, Israel has not responded to the UN demand for transparency in the field of nuclear armament. China has declared the weapons in its possession. Even Iraq and many other states have declared their arsenals, but Israel has not.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Was this subject raised with the Israelis during the negotiations in which you took part?

[Fakhr] At the Madrid Conference, they asked that we not raise this subject. During the negotiations that took place in Moscow in January 1992, they said to let this issue pass quietly. They said that all the Israeli armament systems would be disclosed and would become the subject of negotiations. During the last session in Oman, the head of the Israeli delegation stated that they would deal with the Arab concern about Israeli nuclear weapons at the appropriate time. However, this change is inconsistent with the extent of international efforts being made and the clear Egyptian position on this issue.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] What were the conditions under which Egypt signed the NPT?

[Murtada] Following the signing of the Camp David treaty, many parties thought that peace in the area was imminent and that Egypt's signing of this treaty would encourage Israel also to sign it, thus establishing peace and balance in the area. Egypt, therefore, signed the treaty out of this conviction and not for other reasons.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] The Americans say that when Vice President Al Gore arrives in Egypt, he will be carrying with him an Israeli commitment to sign the NPT in the future. Is this legally sufficient for Egypt as a guarantee?

[Salah] A commitment to sign in the future does not legally provide a guarantee. But if the commitment is in writing and specifies when in the foreseeable future Israel will sign the NPT, this could be a guarantee, particularly as we are approaching the nuclear armament review conference in April. We must view, with appreciation, any international effort to urge Israel to sign the international treaty, as we will afterwards need a regional nuclear nonproliferation treaty.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] The United States has reportedly sent a message to Egypt to persuade it to sign the treaty.

[Jalal] If this were true, I would reject it for several reasons. Israel says it will be ready to discuss the nuclear issue when peace is achieved in the Middle East. It is known that the Middle East boundaries, in Israel's view, extend from Somalia to Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan. The establishment of peace with all these states could take at least 50 years. Israel is asking the Arabs to end the economic boycott and establish complete normal relations with it, while it continues to support the idea of negotiations on the nuclear issue. This is completely unfair.

I think that the only thing that will make the Arab position effective and strong is for the Arabs to immediately link the need for Israel to sign the NPT with the continuation of the peace negotiations, the normalization of relations with Israel, and any regional cooperation with it. Such an Arab position will make Israel face the reality.

Furthermore, international experience shows that nuclear imbalance provides the greatest scientific impetus for neighboring states to try to catch up and address such imbalance. For example, Russia did not try to acquire nuclear weapons until the U.S. advantage in this field became evident. Likewise, Pakistan did not try until India and Korea showed that they have the advantage.

Therefore, Israel's nuclear capability will be the impetus for Iran, Iraq, or any other Arab state to try to acquire a

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nuclear capability. The opposite of this logic is unacceptable. Matters must be placed in their proper perspective. We might say that Israel is afraid of the nuclear capability of one of the surrounding states. But Israel does not only want to possess this capability, it wants to monopolize it. It destroys the capability of any other state that poses a danger to it. Thus, we can say that what Israel is doing does not only constitute a danger to regional security, but also to international security and to the United States itself.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] What is the Arab states' position on the signing of the treaty? Is there a guarantee that what happened in the treaty for the nonproliferation of chemical weapons will not be repeated?

[Murtada] I think that some Arab states' fear of Israel's monopoly of nuclear weapons in the Middle East will make it easier for them to link their agreement to extend the NPT with Israel's signing of the treaty.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Do you expect such Arab agreement?

[Murtada] I have no information, but convincing all of the Arab states of the need for such a position is easy.

['Amir] We must heavily underline the concept of peace that the peoples of this area want. Our concept of peace is completely different from Israel's.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] What happens if Egypt refuses to sign this treaty? Will there be any sanctions imposed on it?

[Jalal] The question being asked today is: What option will Egypt adopt? I think the only option is to take advantage of this opportunity to correct the imbalance, which would make life impossible. This review of the treaty is the last chance that we have to correct the imbalance. Furthermore, we are not the only country hesitating to sign. There are other states, such as Kenya and Nigeria. Even the United States is unhappy about the 25-year extension proposal.

There are reasons for these countries' reluctance to sign the treaty. Egypt is reluctant to sign because of the Israeli threat. Some states are reluctant because there are no sanctions to eliminate the nuclear weapons of the big powers. Other states view the issue of negative and positive guarantees by the nuclear powers as ineffective. The United States wants the treaty extension to be signed first and then it will agree to discuss the concerns of the various countries. It is not in Egypt's interest to refuse to sign. Yet it is in its interests to link its signing of the treaty with an international undertaking to pressure Israel to join the treaty.

Therefore, Egypt's and the Arab states' position is that they are ready to extend the treaty for 25 years, five years, or indefinitely, as will be agreed upon by the international community, provided the nuclear imbalance in the area is corrected. The countries that want the treaty to be extended indefinitely can pressure Israel to sign the treaty. The same treaty stipulates that no assistance should be extended to any state that refuses to sign the treaty. Yet what happened is the opposite. The states that signed the 25-year treaty received no technological assistance, while the states that did not sign the treaty received all kinds of assistance. We have statistics on this. We only demand that the spirit of the treaty be applied to Israel to make it sign the treaty.

I also object to the term "nuclear-free zone," because of the absence of inspection mechanisms in the area. If Israel and we agree to a nuclear-free zone, it will take 50 years to create mechanisms to inspect and learn Israel's capabilities. We want Israel to first sign and then we will arrange for such mechanisms.

[Murtada] Linking Egypt's agreement to extend the treaty with Israel's signing of the treaty is essential. We must address the U.S. position regarding the universal implementation of the NPT. The treaty's universality is the basis for nonproliferation. Otherwise, the universality concept in the American lexicon would mean that the treaty applies to all states except Israel.

The U.S. administration says it understands Egypt's concern about Israel's nuclear capability. During his current visit to Egypt, the U.S. secretary of defense noted the importance of nuclear disarmament in the world. He said that he would say the same thing to Israel when he visits it.

Therefore, I would say that the treaty must first be reviewed and all reservations taken into consideration. If Egypt signs the agreement to extend the treaty indefinitely and Israel does not sign the treaty before it is extended, Egypt would become internationally bound by the treaty and cannot withdraw from it whatever Israel may do. This also means that Israel would be immune to international pressure, as the world is not interested in the military imbalance in the Middle East. It is only interested in the effects of this imbalance on international security and peace. Since the Arabs have accepted the situation as it is, there will be no impetus for the international community to pressure Israel to change its position. I think expecting that Israel will give up this advantage is naive, unless there is decisive international pressure on it—and not Arab pressure. No international pressure is possible unless the international community feels that such an imbalance will have international repercussions.

We cannot make the international community feel that such an imbalance will have international repercussions unless we get out of the trap to accept, sign, and abide by international treaties and allow Israel not to abide by them. Promises and procrastination must not be accepted. Israel must sign the treaty first before we sign the extension. Otherwise, we would be giving up the chance for international pressure on Israel.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Israel is trying to raise the fear that a state in the area might acquire nuclear capability. Are there indeed such fears, or is this just an excuse to justify its position?

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[Fakhr] Regarding the American message to Egypt to sign the agreement, we think that armament control is something that takes many years. I accept this promise [that Israel will sign the treaty], but with reservations. First, what is meant by "in the near future." Second, we must not forget that the United States has guaranteed Israel's qualitative superiority over the Arab states from the time of President Nixon's administration until now.

Regarding the excuse that Israel is afraid of Iran's nuclear capability, I will say that nuclear power is no longer the monopoly of any state. Every country can produce a nuclear bomb. The opportunity is now available, particularly after the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the availability of scientists and laboratories.

We also must not forget that besides domestic tension, Iran's economic situation is extremely difficult. I do not expect Iran to get involved in the nuclear field. It is naive to hear Israel saying that it will not allow any enemy to possess nuclear weapons, because raw materials are available. How many states, working under the slogan of atomic energy for peaceful purposes, have become nuclear powers? Israel is not justified in saying that since Iran has nuclear weapons, it also must have them. We are talking about peace in the Middle East. Several states have been invited to establish peace. However, contradictions exist in the Israeli position. For example, Israel's prime minister said at the UN General Assembly in 1988 that Israel agrees that the Middle East should be an area free of nuclear and chemical weapons, provided direct negotiations take place with the Arab states. Twelve Arab states have been holding direct negotiations with Israel since 1991. What justification is there for Israel to say now that it will begin talking about nuclear weapons when full peace is established. This is an unacceptable contradiction.

['Amir] The first paragraph of Article 10 of the NPT says that every country has the right to withdraw from the treaty for reasons of national interest. However, the treaty imposes a number of restrictions, not found in any other international treaty. The country must clarify the reasons for its withdrawal and inform the UN Security Council. Its withdrawal cannot take place without the Security Council's knowledge.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] You mean without the Security Council's approval?

['Amir] They should only notify The Security Council. The extension agreement stipulates that every state, exercising its national sovereignty, has the right to withdraw from the treaty, because of extraordinary events affecting its supreme national interests. That state must notify all the member states of the treaty and the UN Security Council three months before withdrawing. The treaty gives the right to every member state to exercise its sovereignty, but also makes it difficult for a state to withdraw from it. The treaty reviewing conference has a few options. It can decide, by a two-thirds majority, to extend the treaty indefinitely or by a specific period. The second option might cause confusion after the specified period.

Therefore, Israel's position is a threat to Arab interests. The Arab states and the international community should understand this. If Israel does not join the treaty and they make no attempt to legally bind Israel regarding the proliferation of nuclear weapons, the Arab states' interests would be affected. The states that do not approve the treaty extension will have the chance to give their legal explanations and reasons.

[Murtada] I would like to say that Iran, which Israel fears, is a member of the NPT, while Israel still refuses to join the treaty and to subject its nuclear installations to inspection. It is unreasonable that Israel should remain the sole nuclear state in the Middle East and then demand an unjust peace with the Arabs.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] What would Israel's position be if Egypt were to make its approval contingent on Israel's signing of the treaty?

[Fakhr] Egypt is the one that came out with the initiative to make the Middle East a nuclear-free zone. Therefore, it is logical that it would approve the extension of the treaty. However, Egypt must make its approval contingent upon Israel's agreement to sign the treaty. We are engaged in a peace process. We are engaged in negotiations about security arrangements and are talking about nuclear weapons in the Middle East and the world. So, a link must be made in order to safeguard Egyptian national security and Egyptian military capability.

['Amir] The forthcoming conference provides an opportunity for the world to exert pressure on Israel to agree to sign the treaty and be bound by legal commitments. It must not miss this opportunity.

[Jalal] I would like to praise President Mubarak's statements in this respect. Linking Egypt's signing of the treaty with Israel's is considered the true starting point and the bell the international community should hear. I think that the president has rung the warning bell at the appropriate time, before the preparatory committee meets. The president has said that the situation cannot continue like this, despite Egypt's concessions and flexibility. We have the right to ring this bell, and the president has done it. In my opinion, all thinkers should support this honorable position.

[Murtada] From now until the treaty review conference in April, we must try to mobilize public opinion, including organizations, unions, parties, governmental and nongovernmental figures, to exert pressure and support this Arab and Egyptian position. I propose that an international conference be held to discuss and explain this problem.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Are there any guarantees that we can achieve a unified Arab position?

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[Murtada] it is very easy to achieve a unified Arab position.

[Jalal] I have said that Egypt and the Arabs have no other choice. This is our last chance. We are dealing with extremely important matters. I support the idea of a conference, even if it is held in the United States, to mobilize public opinion in the world and in Israel itself. Nuclear weapons are dangerous not only to the Arabs, but to the Israeli people, too.

[Fakhr] When the Israeli people gave their vote for peace, they knew the meaning of peace. The Israeli citizen is aware of the consequences of his government's decisions. The Israeli people must be aware of the price they will pay in a nuclear arms race. We must address the Israeli people about the dangers and the price they have to pay for their government's decision to monopolize nuclear weapons.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] To conclude, Israel possesses nuclear weapons, Egypt has the right to make its agreement to sign the treaty contingent on Israel's, and the Arab states are called upon to adopt a unified position and disregard the statement of Israeli Foreign Minister Peres. Thank you.

Parliamentarians Ask To Debate Government on NPT

NC1402172795 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1705 GMT 14 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 14 Feb (MENA)—Thirty five People's Assembly members have submitted a request to Speaker Dr. Ahmad Fathi Surur demanding a public debate on the government's position on the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT].

The members, representing the National Democratic Party, the National Progressive Unionist Grouping Party, and independents, stressed the need for the government to report its final decision on this issue and any developments concerning it to the People's Assembly.

Commentary: Peace Should Not Be 'Squandered'

NC1402153395 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 14 Feb 95

[Commentary by Samir 'Abd-al-Tawwab: "Peace in the Middle East Between Abatement and Prevalence"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The five-sided Washington meetings tried to give a major boost to the Middle East peace process amid the Arab parties' fears that the region is going through a severe crisis caused by the stalled Palestinian-Israeli talks and the absence of points of agreement to start the Syrian-Israeli and Lebanese-Israeli negotiations.

Alarm bells are warning that the peace efforts in the region are receding, yet the impetus behind the efforts remains. These efforts are continuing because peace, and peace alone, is the only alternative the region has to end 50 years of conflict on condition that this peace is comprehensive and just so that it can last.

It is clear that Egypt is one of the strongest parties giving the peace process positive thrusts enabling it to continue and face the challenges and obstacles thrown up by Israel. Using security as a pretext, Israel is giving flimsy and futile excuses so that it can keep the Palestinian territories, or some of them, the Syrian Golan, or some of it, and the Lebanese security strip, or most of it. It is thus ignoring that land in return for peace was the major principle with which the peace process began and that not one inch of these territories will be relinquished. It is not logical, legal, or reasonably acceptable to let Israel have the territories, security, and peace all at once, while the Arabs and the Palestinians only obtain slogans that carry the name of peace but lack any understandable context.

The five-sided Washington talks were held to end the vicious circle in the peace process, a vicious circle that has halted the efforts of most countries looking for a lasting and just peace in the Middle East to enable the region's countries to start anew the process of civilized progress that the major powers are making. The Washington meeting tried to create—again—a practical concept for continuing the peace process and for overcoming the difficulties. U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher explained this concept in the following four points when he read the final statement:

1. It was asserted that Israel and the Palestinian Authority [PA] have agreed to fulfill all the clauses of the agreements existing between them.

2. Both the Palestinian and Israeli sides expressed their understanding of each other's needs and also agreed that Israel's security requirements and the Palestinians' political and economic requirements should be fulfilled through cooperation between them.

3. The PA pledged to combat terrorism.

4. The Israeli side pledged to implement the second stage of the Declaration of Principles in full.

Here we come to the crux of the problem: the second stage of the Declaration of Principles. It is evident that Israel is intentionally thwarting this stage and impeding its implementation, especially the legislative elections, the redeployment of the Israeli forces, the administrative and legal issues relating to the settlements and settlers, and the other issues that could bring security and safety to the Palestinians and provide the economic and social climate that will enable the PA to carry out its administrative and executive role of serving the Palestinian people. All of this depends on the role and nature of regional cooperation, which primarily relies on having the Palestinian-Israeli, Syrian- Israeli, and Lebanese-Israeli talks reach a final result. There can be no serious and practical regional cooperation that achieves the

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desired objectives if an agreement on real peace in the region built on fair bases is not reached.

It is important that the ruling and nonruling Israeli establishments understand these facts, which concern the peace process as a whole. They should not look at the issue only from the angle of their interests and security. Interests and security are of equal concern to all the countries of the region.

We are discussing peace, we seek it, and we hope to achieve and implement its principles. Without this, peace will remain suspended and the process will remain threatened by deadlock and stagnation.

Returning to the beginning and the efforts made to find a real opportunity for peace for the first time in the region, we do not exaggerate when we say that this historic opportunity must not be lost because of the wrong calculations and ambitions in the Arab territories. Peace in the Middle East and its effects on all the region's peoples is much more valuable than to be squandered for the sake of some territories that we do not believe provide the alleged security. Peace has certainly come within our reach. Is it reasonable to let it escape from our hands? Perhaps all the parties know of these facts and realize the dangers of differences and their destructive effects on all the region's countries and peoples, regardless of their nationalities.

Human Rights Group Criticizes Police Actions

NC1402121095 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 10 Feb 95 p 2

[FBIS Translated Text] The Egyptian Human Rights Organization [EHRO] has voiced deep concern over the acts of violence and counterviolence in al-Minya Governorate. EHRO pointed out that the number of people who suffer from the policy of collective punishment has increased. It said that the security forces have imposed a curfew, launched wide-scale campaigns of indiscriminate arrests, taken hostages, destroyed plantations, and demolished and burned houses. Furthermore, school classes and work in government offices have been disrupted, the organization added.

In its report, which covers the period from November 1994 to mid- January 1995, EHRO warns against the spread of such bloody operations to other areas in the governorate and other governorates in Upper Egypt. The report shows that 65 people in al-Minya were killed within a period of two months. The report notes that the number of monthly victims has risen from nine to 40.

In its report, the organization says that during January, 87 people were killed, including 25 policemen, 50 fundamentalists, and 12 other citizens. EHRO calls for ending this evil cycle of acts of violence which portend the undermining of the supremacy of law and the human rights principles.

Forces in Somalia Preparing for Return

NC1402164895 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1545 GMT 14 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 14 Feb (MENA)—The Egyptian forces participating in the international peacekeeping effort in Somalia have begun preparations to return to the homeland within the next few days. This action is in conjunction with the UN resolution to terminate the mission of the international forces in Somalia by the end of March.

The Egyptian forces in Somalia are currently carrying out maintenance work on their weapons, equipment, and engines and preparing them for transport to Egypt. The Egyptian forces have also handed over Mogadishu Airport to the Pakistani forces operating within the UN forces.

Staff Brigadier General 'Abd-al-Jalil al-Fakhrani, commander of the Egyptian peacekeeping troops in Somalia, stated that the Egyptian forces succeeded in forming a strong relationship with the Somali people by offering real help to the Somalis regardless of their tribal or political affiliations.

He added that the Egyptian forces succeeded in implementing all the duties they were given with great precision and commitment. This fact emerged very clearly in a letter of thanks from UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus-Ghali's special representative in Somalia to Field Marshal Husayn Tantawi, minister of defense and war production. In this letter, the UN representative praised the major role Egyptian forces played in protecting UN installations in Somalia and those working in them and in securing the rest of the vital installations, as well as bringing relief to those among the Somali people who needed it most.

Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi Meets With 'Experts' in Tajoura Area

LD1402162495 Tripoli JANA in English 1442 GMT 14 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tripoli/ An Nawar [Feb] 14/ JAMAHARIYIA NEWS AGENCY—Within the pattern of his inciting role towards the exploitation of all available resources and their manipulation within a scientific strategic, revolutionery act to build up a future base on a strong economy investing all potentials, the leader of the revolution met the experts in Tajoura area, who are holding their forum under the motto, With Knowledge, Experience, Planning and Follow-Up We Will Conquer Backwardliness and Create Progress.

The experts received the leader of the revolution with clamour confirming absolute commitment towards the building of the ideal exemplary Jamahariya through the exploitation of all local resources and potentials in each

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area, towards the achievement of a comprehensive economic plan based on scientific criteria, to achieve peace and progress in all areas of the Great Jamahariya.

The leader of the revolution spoke to the experts of Tajoura about the tasks and responsibilities cast on their shoulders in implementing a total, comprehensive and integrated plan based on local resources, to perform a historical shift towards progress and welfare in the Great Jamahariya and conducting the studies and researchers on the potential of the area and the exploitation of the resources and capabilities in favour of local residents and in enhancement of welfare and progress.

The experts Of Tajoura area welcomed the leader in a speechj and expressed their happiness to meet him, the symbol of their loftiness and pride and re-affirmed their absolute commitment towards constant action aimed at adaptation of know-how and science to achieve progress and realise the exemplary and ideal Jamahariya.

The experts in Tajoura offered a boquet to the leader in expression of their loyalty for the maker of the era of loyalty.

They also offered the leader a shield of defiance in renewal of their pledge of allegiance and in assertion of preparedness for defiance, confrontation and resistance in defense of the revolution, the leader and ther huge civilisational achievements of the revolution.

The experts of Tajoura presented a number of studies and researches and plans of programmee which they have drawn up under the sponsorship of the popular leadership in the area to enhance progress which was achieved through the great Al Fateh revolution.

Algerian Foreign Minister Arrives in Tripoli

LD1402175795 Tripoli Voice of Greater Arab Homeland in Arabic 1715 GMT 14 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Brother Mohamed Salah Dembri, foreign minister in the sisterly republic of Algeria, arrived in Tripoli this evening on a visit to the Great Jamahiriyah. He was met by the brother secretary of the General's People Committee for Unity and the Algerian ambassador to the Great Jamahiriyah.

JANA Criticizes VOA, Western Media Reportage

LD1302213995 Tripoli JANA in English 1428 GMT 13 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tripoli/An Nawar 13 [13 Feb]/ JAMAHARIYA NEWS AGENCY—The Western news media is spreading blatant lies about so-called democracy, by regarding any regime that does not follow Western ways as a regime of dictatorship.

It has become clear that spreading such ideas about Western democracy is a hidden colonialist dream, which looks to other countries in the world as colonies which belong to them. Such a black dream is aiming to force the other regimes in the world to join the Western system which is falsely called democracy.

JANA's internal affairs reporter asserted that this is not the first time and it won't be the last attempt by the Voice of America, the radio of American intelligence, to give a bad impression about the countries, who were not subjugated to American hegemony and did not live off American aid. It is known that such news media are emphasising the absence of democracy in different countries of the world and about the dangers of dictatorships and human rights as if these media are speaking from the land of paradise. The reporter asked why these media do not speak about democracy in their countries.

Such questions will [word indistinct] an unheaval of such media. But we said to these media that Western democracy is a democracy of the individual dictator, which is the worse dictatorship in this time, in which different countries are trampled under foot. We knew very well that America is governed by the National Security Agency, which has 11 members, most of them generals, controlling the powers in the United States of America and the Congress, president, agencies, media and other institutions are mere tools for a small group and each of its members is a real dictator.

Committee Statement on Palestinians, 'Arafat

LD1102230595 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 11 Feb 95

[Statement by the Secretariat of the General People's Committee for Unity; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Time is proving the correctness of our analysis of the Arab reality and the onslaught to which the Arab nation is being subject, which aims at its existence and its destruction. It also proves the credibility of our stances regarding the Palestine issue and the sincerity of our support to the Palestinian people's struggle to regain their homeland and frustrate the plots and schemes which are aimed at their issues, particularly since bargaining has led to the squandering of their rights and the recognition of those who have usurped them.

To confirm our principled stances, our analysis, and our informed and extensive understanding of the enemy's aims and strategy, the development of events has revealed the facts which we have been persistently stressing within the framework of our principled stances. These are:

1. The Israeli enemy, which has usurped Palestine, is trying to realise its Old Testament dream of establishing a Jewish state from the Nile to the Euphrates by swallowing up Arab land and imposing its presence by the force of weapons of mass destruction and the massive military arsenal it possesses. It is trying to establish its false legitimacy through a scheme of imposing its presence on Arabs and by forcing them to accept a compromise on land in exchange for gestures of wanting peacec.

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2. The capitulation of Arabs to the Israeli enemy's methods by following its negotiating policy, which is programmed by the signing of a series of misleading and humiliating agreements, through which the Israeli enemy has stripped the Palestine issue from its international cover and turned it into nothing more than secret talks held under police methods in Oslo and elsewhere, has proved to be futile. [passage omitted]

3. The Israelis can only live by war so that they can seize more Arab land. The statement made by the Israeli prime minister, the terrorist Rabin, and his threat of war against the Arab nation, is a clear indication of an Israeli method by which it exercises pressure to get more compromises and to unite the ranks of the Israelis. This terrorist mentality is contrary to the gestures of a peace mirage made by the Israelis.

4. Palestine is an Arab land, and will not become a promised land in line with the Israeli lie. Palestine will remain Arab, with all its historical, political, and social constituents. If it ever becomes a promised land, it will be the promised land of death for Jews, who have been humiliated by the societies which are hostile to them, and which deported them to Palestine to be rid of them and destroy them.

5. We reaffirm the objective solution we previously proposed, to achieve peace by the coexistence of Arabs with Palestinian Jews soas to set up their own democratic state, just as peace was achieved by the people of South Africa. This will be achieved by the return of the Palestinian people to their country and the return of the Jews deported from Russia, Europe, and Arab countries to their countries of origin. This is the ideal solution through which a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace could be achieved.

6. Subservience to the will of the Israelis and the pursuance of a policy of squandering is reflected in all the agreements signed with them.

Yasir 'Arafat, who supervised the Oslo agreement and signed many agreements with Israel in isolation from the Palestinian people, has become isolated from his people, and the Israelis and American have abandoned him. The leadership of the Fatah movement and the PLO, with all its factions, have also abandoned him. He has become nothing more than a mayor; in fact, less than any mayor in Palestine and the occupied territories. He is being dictated to by the Israelis to become a part of the Israeli security to protect their settlements and soldiers from the angry Palestinian people. [passage omitted]

Sanctions Protested to UN Human Rights Commission

LD1502112995 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0900 GMT 15 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Geneva, 15 Jan (JANA)—The Great Jamahiriyah's delegate at the 51st session of the UN Human Rights Commission has stressed that the unjust measures imposed by the Western states on the Great Jamahiriyah via the so-called Security Council constitute an obstacle to development plans in the Great Jamahiriyah.

In his address, he explained that the unjust measures imposed on the Great Jamahiriyah have caused damage in the agricultural, livestock, health, transport, communications, and industrial sectors, pointing out that the Great Jamahiriyah has proposed numerous initiatives to resolve the crisis with the Western states. [passage omitted]

Al-Muntasir Meets PRC Officials

WA20021524

For reportage on the visit by 'Umar Mustafa al-Muntasir, secretary of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation, to China, please see the Near East & South Asia section of the 15 February China DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

Sudan

Democratic Unionist Leader on Party Congress

MM1402163895 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 11 Feb 95 p5

[Interview with al-Sharif Zayn-al-'Abidin al-Hindi, secretary general of the Sudanese Democratic Unionist Party, by Nizar Daww-al-Na'im in London on 10 February]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Daww-al-Na'im] The leaders of the main Sudanese opposition forces recently signed an agreement in Asmara stating their position on the issue of the south, giving it the right to self-determination. How do you view that agreement?

[Al-Hindi] Every Sudanese abroad has a right to contribute as much as he can to the opposition against the current regime. What most opposition members of various affiliations agree upon is work to bring down the regime, but drawing a picture of the country's future is something which no opposition group can monopolize, particularly when it is a matter of serious decisions relating to the unity of the country and the people.

The recent agreements, which are not binding on the people and are not about the citizens in the north and the south, are nothing more than a mere political maneuver to attract attention, considering that the (National Democratic) Grouping lacked ability, unity, and harmony. The two factions which signed the agreement with one of the four southern factions do not represent the wishes of the north and the south or the will of the Sudanese people in any way.

[Daww-al-Na'im] So what is your position as to how the issue should be tackled?

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[Al-Hindi] We in the Democratic Unionist Party [DUP] are fully committed to the 1988 peace agreement. What interests us is that the constitutional conference should be held with an international presence so that we can expose the tragedy unfolding in southern Sudan and the facts which the international community failed to understand and which the media ignored. The rest of the agreements which followed that do not concern us in the party and are nothing but capitulation to Dr. John Garang (leader of the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement) [SPLM].

[Daww-al-Na'im] Your party congress met last week. What did it decide? Have there been any policy changes?

[Al-Hindi] The congress met in extreme secrecy with representatives from home and abroad attending. It discussed the end result of the opposition during the years 1993 and 1994 and made an objective assessment of the situation after studying it from all angles. The party decided to totally reject the recent agreements. [passage omitted]

The party also decided to initiate the second practical phase of the resistance against the regime, which is naturally and structurally different from the previous phase. It would not be appropriate to disclose its details. The party repeated its appeal to the Sudanese masses at home and abroad to engage in a dialogue for the fulfillment of that objective. It will also issue a statement to do with boycotting the elections for which the regime is preparing. [passage omitted]

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Bahrain

Country Not To Attend ICJ Session

JN1502070395 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0610 GMT 15 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Manama, 15 Feb (WAKH)—A responsible source at the Bahraini Foreign Ministry has stated that the State of Bahrain will not attend the session the International Court of Justice [ICJ] will hold today to issue a decision on its competence in the issue of maritime border and regional matters between Qatar and Bahrain.

The State of Bahrain has always adhered to its view that the ICJ does not have the power to deal with this case, on the basis of the unilateral Qatari request presented to the court on 8 July 1991, because both sides have not reached an agreement on presenting their dispute to the court.

The ICJ acknowledged in its verdict, which was issued on 1 July 1994, that the unilateral Qatari request was incomplete because it only includes some elements of the dispute between the two parties. The ICJ then decided to give both parties an opportunity to present to it all controversial issues either in one joint request or in two separate requests, as both sides agree upon, within five months as of the date in which the verdict was issued.

During the talks, which were held between the attorneys of both countries in front of the ICJ throughout October and November 1994 to implement the ICJ's ruling, the attorney of the State of Bahrain called on the attorney of the State of Bahrain, in his message dated 25 November 1994, to agree on and sign with the State of Bahrain the joint procedure, which was proposed by Qatar itself on 12 November 1994 so as to present all controversial issues to the ICJ. However, the attorney of the State of Qatar rejected the offer made by the State of Bahrain in his message dated 27 November 1994. As a result of this, it became impossible to present all of the information on the controversial issues to the court as stipulated by the Court's verdict. On 30 November 1994, the State of Qatar presented a separate request, contrary to the court's ruling, so as to show that the ruling allows the State of Qatar to continue with its case and to amend its unilateral request of 1991. This is incorrect. Also, the separate Qatari proceeding, which was presented by the State of Qatar to the court on 30 November 1994, is also incomplete and void because it was not approved by the State of Bahrain and because it did not present all controversial issues to the court as stipulated by the verdict issued on 1 July 1994.

The State of Bahrain believes that the question of the dispute, which was unilaterally presented to the court by Qatar in 1991, was finished on 27 November 1994 when Qatar's representative rejected Bahrain's offer on joint procedures. On that basis, Bahrain believes there is no foundation to issue a new verdict. Furthermore, it has not asked the court to issue any new verdict during its recent correspondence with the court over the application of the verdict.

As a sovereign state, Bahrain has stressed to the court anew its political and legal objections to presenting the dispute to the court or asking it to consider the dispute, whether on the basis of the first "separate request" which Qatar made in 1991 or the "unilateral procedure" which Qatar later requested on 30 November 1994.

Bahrain strongly believes that the interests of the Gulf region as a whole can be achieved in a better way if the two parties resume their talks within the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC]. In their 15th summit, held in December 1994 in Bahrain, the GCC member states stressed their commitment to resolve the standing issues among them through bilateral official channels, and if this is not possible, then disputes can be presented to the GCC Supreme Council in its next summit to arrive at appropriate solutions.

On this occasion, Bahrain renews its fraternal offer to sisterly Qatar, announced on 12 February, regarding the start of serious negotiations between the two sisterly states to arrive at a solution to the standing dispute among them, bilaterally and through diplomatic means, or, if that is not possible, through the GCC in accordance with the recent GCC Supreme Council's resolution in that regard.

Kuwait

Foreign Minister on Iraqi 'Ploy' on Kuwaiti Prisoners

LD1402205395 Kuwait KSC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 14 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir, first deputy prime minister and foreign minister, today concluded a two-day official visit to Italy, during which he held talks with senior Italian officials on consolidating bilateral relations between the two countries. More details in this report by our correspondent in Rome Rif'at al-Najjar.

[Al-Najjar] The first deputy prime minister and foreign minister this afternoon concluded his working visit to Italy by meeting with Italian Foreign Minister Susanna Agnelli. [passage omitted]

After the meeting, Kuwaiti television held an interview with the first deputy prime minister.

[Begin recording] [Correspondent] Your meetings in Rome ended today. What are the results of your meeting with the Italian foreign minister, Susanna Agnelli?

[Shaykh Sabah] I was pleased to meet with the Italian foreign minister. We completed the talks I had with the [Italian] prime minister yesterday. I sensed the same

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feeling and direction from the foreign minister as I was given by the Italian prime minister.

A joint commission was set up to follow up issues concerning bilateral relations. The head of the Italian delegation will cooperate with the head of the Kuwaiti delegation at the UN in coordinating and cooperating regarding the issues that would be discussed by the UN Security Council. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] First deputy prime minister and foreign minister, there have been reports about Iraqi efforts to deal with the Kuwaiti prisoners within the framework of an Arab initiative recently. What is your view on that?

[Shaykh Sabah] This is not the first time that Iraq has attempted to change this from an international issue to an Arab issue. Therefore, I hope that officials in the Arab world will bear in mind that this is an Iraqi ploy to remove this issue from the international agenda and put it on the Arab agenda. This is to involve the Arab world in problems which we can do without. This is an international issue on which a UN Security Council resolution has been passed under Chapter 7. Therefore, my personal conviction is that no Arab state ...[pauses]... many Arab countries, including the brothers in the Maghreb and some other brothers who have been approached about these issues, would believe that this issue concerns the UN Security Council resolution and the Red Cross. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Qatar

Foreign Minister Seeks More Ties With Iran

LD1302194195 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1730 GMT 13 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Qatar has asked for further expansion of ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran. The foreign minister today described the Islamic Republic of Iran as an important political pole in the region. He also stressed the need for expansion of bilateral ties with Iran in all fields.

Speaking at a meeting with our country's ambassador in Doha, Shaykh Hamad Bin Jasim al-Thani expressed the hope that by implementing joint projects, including the project to transfer water from Iran to Qatar, grounds would be prepared for further expansion of ties between the two states.

Saudi Arabia

Paper Criticizes Cairo Summit, Israeli Policy

JN1002195595 Al-Dammam AL-YAWM in Arabic 4 Feb 95 p 9

[Editorial: "An Obvious Error"]

[FBIS Translated Text] If we say that the Cairo summit managed to remove Israel from its isolation and gave it an opportunity to learn about Arab views toward the Oslo agreement—because the Palestinian-Israeli track of the peace process is the most important point in the solution—we also have to realize that this summit coincided with the internal conflict over Israeli elections.

Rabin attended the summit overloaded with his own internal problems, which distracted him completely from comprehensively considering the regional crisis and its various tracks. This could be directly linked to the fact that the conferees did not achieve any decisive or tangible results after discussing the overall topics listed on the summit's agenda.

However, the Israeli reactions that followed the quadrilateral summit suggest that Israel still does not understand the requirements of peace. This is because Israel still refuses to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and still plays its old tune about regional peace being achieved without Damascus and that entrenching its settlement policy in the Arab territories will allegedly provide a larger security area—protecting it from Palestinian operations, despite the fact that the recurrent fedayeen operations, including the recent Netanya operation, have confirmed that this allegation is invalid and feeble.

Despite the fact that, after this summit, some Arab political circles were optimistic about reactivating the Palestinian-Israeli track, this optimism is not necessarily good, because Israel is still tightening its siege around the occupied West bank and Gaza Strip and continues to entrench its settlement policies. It recently permitted the building of thousands of new houses. Israel also continues to arm the Jewish settlers, who are still the major obstacle to a just solution to the crisis, not only regarding the Palestinian-Israeli track but also regarding the peace process in the entire region. Moreover, Israel still refuses to redeploy its army outside the densely-populated areas in the West Bank, which should have taken place in July.

In any case, this optimism is premature because Israel has not changed its policies toward the regional crisis following the Cairo summit. Apparently, Israel does not intend to grant the Palestinian people a powerful and balanced authority, as is confirmed by the fact that it persistently obstructs the Palestinian Authority's development and prevents the entrenchment of the economic bases that could pave the way for the self-rule plan. For this purpose, Israel still places more obstacles before those wishing to invest their money in the self-rule areas. These obstacles are represented by constantly suggesting to investors that the situation in these areas will remain tense and that investments there are a risk with unguaranteed consequences.

Hence, it is an obvious error to consider the quadrilateral summit as something that has ended the stalled regional peace process. This is because Israel still insists on pursuing its extortionist policy in terms of taking and not giving, showing intransigence and not making concessions, and attempting to obtain both land and peace in accordance with its own concepts about peace. These

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concepts are rejected not only by the Arabs, but also by international legitimacy and the world states that love justice, freedom, and peace.

It is clear after the quadrilateral summit that Israel has not changed its old policies toward the peace process. This is because it still clings to its own peace, which gives nothing to the Arabs and entrenches its concept about occupying the territories and expanding the settlement activity in order to preserve its alleged security. This does not give us any real signs for the optimism that might have been sensed after the recent quadrilateral summit.

Israel 'Direct Beneficiary' of 'Cold War' on Fundamentalism

MM1402160695 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 14 Feb 95 p 9

[Article by Basim al-Jisr: "New Cold War Is Between West and 'Extremist Fundamentalism'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The declaration of war by the leader of the Republican majority in the U.S. Congress against what he terms fundamentalism and extremist Islamists was not a surprise.

Those following the new U.S. political orientation which the Republican majority is trying to impose on the U.S. Administration, expected this declaration. Not because the Republicans are more or less "hostile" toward extremist Islamic movements, more or less "fearful" of the Islamic awakening, more or less yearning for peace, or more or less sympathetic to Israel than the Democrats and President Clinton. But because the the new political view of the Republican majority and its leader Newt Gingrich is a hard-line view in all directions and in all spheres, domestic and foreign. Compromises, the "small steps" policy, diplomatic solutions and settlements, and "humanitarian intervention" are words that are almost nonexistent in the Republican political vocabulary.

But is the announcement of this radical position by the leader of the U.S. parliamentary majority, plus the statement made by the NATO secretary general on European-Arab cooperation to fight the "Islamic fundamentalist threat," enough to prompt us to say that a new cold war has begun—officially or actually—between the Western states, led by the United States, and what is known informationally and politically as "fundamentalism" or "extremist Islamic movements" and the regimes supporting them. Gingrich names two of them: the Iranian regime and the Sudanese regime.

Western political authorities announced two years ago—more than once—that they differentiate between Islam as a religion and the Islamic political religious movements, and between the Islamic awakening in the world and political fundamentalism—which is a way of acknowledging the reality and at the same time expressing their care for their friendships and important interests with most Islamic and Arab states and the Islamic world, whose population, strategic importance, and role in today's and tomorrow's world can no longer be ignored by any Western state. But the problem lies in the fact that it is not easy—neither with regard to the reality nor with regard to implementation—to differentiate theoretically between Arab opposition and the Islamic rejection of the conditions for an imposed Arab-Israeli peace on the one hand, and terrorism on the other. Especially when the peace process, which is the principal pivot around which relations between the West and the Arab and Islamic worlds are revolving, is obstructed or hampered. This is because a "war" with the regimes and political movements opposed to or resisting the peace process, or declaring their radical hostility to the West and Israel, without obliging Israel to recognize Arab rights, would not lead to speeding up or facilitating the peace process. It would, rather, lead to embarrassing and weakening the friendly Arab and Islamic governments banking on a just peace, hence obstructing the peace process and turning the Islamic-Western cold war—declared beforehand—into a war or heated confrontation.

After this declared Western hostility toward fundamentalist movements, the only possible practical results could be new support from Western capitals for the states in conflict with them [the movements], in particular Egypt and Algeria, or political tension with Khartoum and Tehran. As for the direct beneficiary, it is—as usual—Israel.

Paper Views Yemeni 'Trends' in Border Talks

JN1302205095 Al-Dammam AL-YAWM in Arabic 9 Feb 95 p 9

[Editorial: "Wailing of Those Who Practice Oneupmanship"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Since the talk began to increase about the Saudi-Yemeni border, two clear trends have emerged in Yemen. The first is a Yemeni patriotic trend that is working sincerely for Yemen and believes that it is in the interest of any country to have good relations with its neighbors. This patriotic trend is led by Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Ahmar. This trend began to serve Yemen in an objective manner without resorting to oneupmanship and without requesting counsel from outside Yemen.

The other trend, is a "personal" one that exploits everything, and is even ready to sell the whole of Yemen in order to polish the image of a person or settle accounts with another. This trend played suspicious roles in Yemen's foreign relations. When the opportunity became available for this trend, it carried out a wide-scale destructive operation against relations with the neighbors. It gambled with Yemen and mortgaged it to Baghdad in return for sick dreams.

This trend is trying to resume its past lost experience. It tried on more than one occasion to sabotage the border talks that are going on in Riyadh between the kingdom

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and Yemen. The talks are between a Yemeni patriotic delegation that represents the government and people, led by Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, House of Representatives speaker, and comprises the deputy prime minister and planning minister.

The party of those who hide something in their hearts began to complain and fabricate lies everywhere. They create clamor and make statements that are purely provocative, not only to the kingdom, but also to the Yemeni delegation that continues its talks in Riyadh. All Yemeni officials should have sought to provide a suitable atmosphere to render the talks successful because forging good and clear relations with the neighbors is an advance objective and a great national objective of any country.

It seems that there are some people who want to obstruct progress. We note that there is a ridiculous contradiction between the statements made by officials or semi-officials in Sanaa—through which they try to create clamor and distort the kingdom's position on the one hand, and undermine the ability of the Yemeni negotiating delegation, on the other—and the statements of the members of the Yemeni delegation who emphasize that the talks are going well and progress continues. The delegation members also say that the talks are held in a fraternal atmosphere, especially since the kingdom also said that the talks are going well.

If those who are negotiating and who are concerned with the failure or success of the negotiations emphasize that the talks are continuing and making progress, then why are those sitting in their offices in Sanaa or aboard planes transporting them between the world cities expressing opinions on the talks and their future, and trying to undermine what has been realized in Riyadh.

The optimism which Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Ahmar is expressing these days makes us confident of that man's ability to resist all dust storms blowing from Sanaa, which certainly do not serve anyone other than some individuals. Regrettably these storms are against Yemen, in the first place, and are aimed at changing it into a bourse for political gambling in which personal objectives, party oneupmanship, and foreign "counsels" are mixed together. These foreign counsels in particular seem to be active in Yemen more than any other time, even if Yemen pays their bills without anything in return except daydream promises.

CDLR Bulletin No. 33 on Saudi Events

MS1502091195 London CDLR MONITOR in English 3 Feb 95

[Bulletin No. 33 of the Committee for the Defense of Legitimate Rights of Saudi Arabia (CDLR); issued on 3 February—received by fax 13 February]

[FBIS Transcribed Text]

Your Right to Know —Empire of Deceit In Decline...

The amount of money devoted to the acquisition of centres and institutions which have political and social influence, and money expended on the media, together with money used to buy the loyalty of scholars and intellectuals collectively adds up to vast sums.

Why has the huge spending in these fields not been decreased at a time of economic crisis?

On the contrary, spending in this area has increased rapidly despite the necessity of increased taxes and tariffs in a futile effort to decrease the budget deficit.

Why does Fahd borrow for the sake of the continuation of his huge propaganda program, which has already cost many billions of riyals? It is obvious and well known that this propaganda is not for the benefit of Islam, nor the defence of the Nation's interests and certainly not for the propagation of the truth. The main objective of this project is to deceive and lie. This is done domestically by emphasising Al Sa'uds practice of Islam and Shari'ah and that money is spent in the interests of the country and the raising of the standard of living. The deceit and lies abroad are continued by the insistence that the regime is stable and that the general public are content and loyal to al Sa'ud.

In some instances, the media will resist the temptation to lie directly, and will attempt to distort reality to the benefit o al - Sa'ud.

This brings us back to repeating the question: —Why is the control of the media a priority to the extent that vast amounts of money are made available to this end, when the country is in the grip of an economic crisis? Why has this huge program of deceit actually increased and what are the secrets behind this? Obviously, the reason is not al Sa'uds wish that they be praised by the media abroad, or at home by Shaykh Salih al-Sadlan, Salih al-Fawzan or the like. The reason runs much deeper than that.

After the domination of al Sa'ud by Fahd's school of thought, the regime has realised that their personal legitimacy has collapsed domestically. They fear that if the true face of al Sa'ud was revealed to the West they would be the subject of humiliation and disgrace.

Fahd is obviously aware that the regime is far from practicing Islam or Sharita and he knows that it would be dangerous for his regime is the Muslim population, who want to be ruled by their faith became aware of the reality of this fact.

However, the people do not judge for themselves, but they look to their Scholars and intellectuals for advice and guidance. This is where the catch is. The Scholars give legitimacy to the regime, and the Scholars bought by al Sa'ud inform the people that their government is practising Islam:— how they are practising it is of no concern to the people. If a Scholar deviates from this path he is considered an outcast. For this reason there has been great interest and necessity to contain a number of Scholars and for them to become an official body sanctioned by the government. Unlimited funds were

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provided to this end, in order to gain religious legitimacy. With regard to political legitimacy and the accomplishments of the Govt., this has been handled by the domestic media which is wholly state controlled.

Abroad, King Fahd and his brothers are aware that they are one of the most corrupt regimes in all aspects:— financially, economically, socially, politically and religiously. They are also aware of the Kingdoms position with regard to human rights violations, prohibition of political participation and as a complete and totalitarian dictatorship. Al Sa'ud are a unique example of one family's total control over all the resources of one country.

Fahd and his brothers are only too well aware that external support from abroad is just as important as religious legitimacy is at home, and for that reason they cannot let international opinion become aware of their true image and reality. It would be unacceptable for democratic countries to support such an ugly. inhumane and oppressive regime.

Therefore, the spending of vast sums of money on more lies, or at least to cover the truth as much as possible, is an absolute necessity for the continued legitimacy al Sa'ud abroad.

The above is an explanation of this huge spending which is still increasing, while the economic crisis continues to cause hardship for the people.

It has been noted that this spending has increased dramatically over the last few months both at home and abroad, as al Sa'ud's vast propaganda machine has recently faced a new challenge.

This challenge has not arisen from some powerful, financial body, not is it due to international political influences. In fact, the challenge has come from where the regime believed they took their legitimacy.

This new challenge has made its message heard both domestically and internationally. The only weapon deployed by this new challenge is "the truth" and using this to expose the lies and deceits perpetrated by al Sa'ud.

The challenge has come about from the huge reform movement which includes Scholars, University professors, businessmen and the general public. The reform movement has been able to spread its message of truth both at home and abroad in an easy to understand language that does not require vast amounts of money, or the backing of big companies and institutions. It only uses the language of truth.

It has become very evident that the message of truth is effective and has penetrated all the barriers of deceit around al Sa'ud with great effectiveness and efficiency to reach the heart of its target.

The strength of the challenge is that the reform movement has not only criticised the regime, but has also offered solutions, both practical and theoretical, and many reformers have sacrificed their freedom in the declaration of their criticism and ideas.

None of al Sa'uds cronies have been able to face up to the reformers. King Fahd has become extremely agitated an for good reason. The Nation has deceived for so long has suddenly awoken to the truth:- no Islam, no Shari'ah, treason, contempt, embezzlement, debauchery and all resource under al Sa'uds control with their left- overs thrown to the people. The corruption of the royal family has now become well known world wide.

The very last subject al Sa'ud want to hear is the western media beginning to speculate on the future of the Kingdom: Is the regime really stable? Can the West trust the future of the Kingdom under al Sa'uds leadership? These questions send shivers of dread along the spine of al Sa'ud. Their deceptions through their propaganda machine have been exposed. The ensuing chaos from this exposure has not given al Sa'ud time to draw breath, let alone revise their policies. The only solution, as they see it, is to spend more, lie more and deceive more, not realising that this is even more weakening and destabilising to state society and economy, and therefore causing more discontent amongst the people.

King Fahd seems to be blind to any solution to this vicious circle of deceit and expense. It would seem to be extremely difficult for this sick regime to come back to it's senses and correct it's mistakes, as suggested by the reformers. The solutions are not difficult, Islam and Shari'ah were not practiced, so go back to Islam and Shari'ah. The family is corrupt, but this is no problem as the family can be controlled. The economy is in crisis, but this is no problem if the will is there to solve the crisis. Oppression and injustice are not a problem as justice and political participation would solve them etc.

These simple solutions seem to be an impossibility to al Sa'ud, if they continue on their present course, that is, their belief that their propaganda is the only solution and their source of legitimacy and power.

We would like to pose a question to al Sa'ud for their contemplation and honest answer. How much of their legitimacy has been lost at home and how much of their reputation have they lost abroad over the last six months?

Indeed, how much more will they lose in the next six months, or the next two years, based on present predictions?

Would it not be more practical for al Sa'ud to accept the fact that their insistence on lying and deceit will only increase the scale of their loss and exposure, which in itself is a weapon in the hands of the challengers?

The real message of reform is not directed at al Sa'ud, as the structure of the royal family at present is in no fit state to carry out any reforms. The message is directed at the people. who are represented by their legitimate leaders. They need to prepare themselves for the

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expected vacuum after the collapse of al Sa'uds propaganda. Scholars, intellectuals, writers, journalists, social leaders are all needed to move in order to ensure the future of the Nation.

After the complete exposure of the truth, the Nation will not be loyal to a leadership that has fought Islam and its preachers, deceived them and has spread corruption in all areas of life. It has become very clear that King Fahd is working towards destroying himself, while at the same time trying to convince the Nation that only members of his "honourable" family have the right to participate in politics. In effect, not only is he destroying al Sa'ud, but he is also depriving the Nation of the chance to lead itself into salvation.

The time has come for the Nation to form a leading council to question the rulers actions, and attempt to reform him if he is still fit for reform, or remove him if necessary.

News

Sultans Aggression..

Prince Sultan continues to deploy troops to the Yemeni border and the Committee has been informed that military equipment is still being positioned along the border.

While some observers are of the belief that war is unlikely, others who are more knowledgeable and informed regarding the situation, believe that Sultan may sanction war at any time and that the chances in favour of war are higher than those against.

The Committee has been informed that Sultan had issued orders to strike civilian and economic targets during his previous attempt at instigating a war, where his plans were thwarted by the intervention of the Americans.

Special sources have also informed the Committee that Sultan gave orders for the use of cluster bombs.

Convoys of tanks and machinery were directed to Jizan area and the 15th squadron of F5 fighters was transferred from Tabuk to Najran.

The Committee appeals to the Muslim brothers in the military, to avoid as much as possible the shedding of Muslim blood by their bands. We direct the same appeal to our Yemeni brothers, and we apologise to them on behalf of our brothers in Saudi Arabia as they are innocent of anything to do with Sultans foolish and criminal decisions.

Let us not forget the detainees during the blessed month of Ramadan...

The Committee offers its congratulations to the Nation for the coming of the holy month of Ramadan and we ask Allah to help us with the fast and prayers, and to accept our worship.

We would like to remind the Nation that Ramadan is upon us and hundreds of the best of the Nation's sons are still incarcerated in the regimes prisons, led by the Scholars and leaders of the Nation, such as Shaykh Salman al-'Awdah, Shaykh Safar al-Hawwalyi, Shaykh Ibrahim al-Dhubayyan, Shaykh 'Ali al-Khudayr, Shaykh Sulayman al-Rushudi, Dr Hamad al-Sulayfah, Shaykh 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Qasim, Shaykh Muhammad al-Farray and The university professors and lecturers Dr Muhsin al-A'waj, Dr Muhammad al-Hudayf, Dr Khalid al-Dawish, 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Wuhaybi, Nayif Aba-al-Khayl and many others, both young and old, who are behind bars for the sake of reform, truth and the salvation of the country from the eminent total collapse.

The Committee would ask the Nation to remember its Scholars and leaders and to ask Allah during this blessed month of Ramadan, to give victory to reformers and preachers to release the Nation from the nightmare of al Sa'ud.

The State of the Sacred Mosque...

Officials of the Sacred Mosque in Mecca were surprised by a royal decision to transfer the contract for the cleaning of the Sacred Mosque from Dallah Company, owned by Salih Karnil, to one of the companies connected to the King.

Officials noticed a definite decline in the level of service offered, along with a decrease in manpower, equipment etc.

It was thought that the decline of service was due to economic reasons for a reduction in spending. However, it soon became clear that the new contract is for 30 million riyals more than the original contract.

Any criticism offered by the officials was quickly silenced by the use of intimidation and threats.

Al Sa'ud and Banks...

Prince Salman Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz's accounts are many and varied, both at home and abroad. One of these accounts is with the Arabic National Bank, where it is 40 million riyals overdrawn.

Similar cases can be found throughout the royal family, whose members spend with no regard for any accountability.

Ibn Baz Surrounded...

It was observed by people present at Shaykh 'Abd-al-'Aziz Ibn- Baz's lectures in Riyadh, that the Shaykh was encircled by a group of intelligence personnel headed by his own (!) secretary Dr. Muhammad al-Shuway'ir. This effectively prevented any questions being put forward that if answered by the Shaykh, may embarrass the regime.

Correction...

In last weeks bulletin, under the heading Feud in the Royal Family, the name Salman Ibn-Fawwaz Ibn-'Abd-al-'Aziz was printed incorrectly, and should have

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been printed as Salman Ibn-Fawwaz Ibn- Sa'ud. The Committee apologises for this unintentional mistake.

United Arab Emirates

Paper: Taba Meeting 'Fosters' Israeli 'Presence'

JN1002183295 Dubayy AL-BAYAN in Arabic 8 Feb 95 p 1

[Editorial: "This Is Their Plan; So What Are We Going To Do?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The meeting that started yesterday in the resort town of Taba in Egypt under the auspices of the U.S. commerce secretary and in the presence of representatives from Egypt, Jordan, the Palestinian Authority, and Israel has a declared objective—to promote trade exchange among the four parties. The undeclared objective, however, is to foster the presence of Israel as an influential party with growing relations amid the Middle East states under a comfortable U.S. umbrella.

Clearly enough, this is a material and moral gain for the Israelis, which they should have obtained only after the realization of a comprehensive and just peace.

It seems that this is the crux of the Israeli-American plan, which is being persistently implemented, vis-a-vis the Middle East problem and through which they are trying to achieve all the gains Israel is expecting from peace. This is taking place at a time when the peace process itself has not been completed, given the obstacles it faces that may remain in place for many years.

This can be confirmed by a U.S. Information Service bulletin issued yesterday which cited a "senior official" of the Clinton administration as saying: "The important thing now is to find ways to further security (meaning the security of Israel). The issues of Jerusalem, settlements, borders, and refugees are very sensitive and very intricate. It is unrealistic to think that these issues can be dealt with at this time."

The senior U.S. official did not allude to Israel's possession of nuclear weapons, although, to Arabs, they represent an issue that is no less important than the issues he referred to in his statements and which he said it is "unnatural" to deal with them at this time.

However, facts prove that there can be no peace between Arabs and Israelis without resolving these intricate issues; namely, Jerusalem, borders, refugees, and possession of nuclear arms.

So, what is the reality of what is going on now, including the five-way meeting in Taba?

Simply, they are trying to help Israel reap all the dividends of peace without having to think it is necessary to make peace. If this is true, what should the Arabs do? It is merely a question. However, to us, its answer means whether to be or not.

Yemen

Salih Notes 'Numerous' Differences in Saudi Border Talks

JN1402190495 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 14 Feb 95

[Report by Faysal in Sanaa]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yemeni President Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih has stated that Yemen will not condone the annexation of its territory or undermining its sovereignty and will not accept the plot to push it into a war with the brothers in Saudi Arabia irrespective of the border differences between the two countries.

Speaking at a popular rally in al-Mukalla, the capital of the Yemeni governorate of Hadhramaut, last night [as heard], Salih alluded to the negotiations between Yemen and Saudi Arabia being held in Riyadh to solve border differences and normalize relations between the two countries. The Yemeni president revealed numerous points of difference between delegations of both sides, such as the Saudi side's rejection of the principle of arbitration as stipulated in the al-Ta'if agreement of 1934, and the full border demarcation with Yemen based on the al-Ta'if agreement and the completion of this demarcation from Jabal Thar, north of the Yemeni governorate of Sa'dah, to the Yemeni borders with the Sultanate of Oman in the northeastern border areas.

Salih said that Yemen will either continue to support dialogue to solve differences with the brothers in Saudi Arabia or seek the help of the Arab League and the United Nations in case bilateral talks become bogged down. He said: We reject the use of force or even the threat to use force and we will never take the position of the aggressor but will defend ourselves when an aggression is mounted against us.

The Yemeni president added: The Yemeni-Saudi border problem must be resolved and the entire world understands the Yemeni viewpoint and Yemen's eagerness to effect a solution based on the two countries' legal and historical rights.

Salih expressed hope that the Yemeni-Saudi joint committee, which is conducting the negotiations in Riyadh, will reach positive results to solve the border problem and restore normal relations between the two countries to realize security, stability, and peace in the region.

Addresses Meeting on Border Dispute

JN1402200395 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1715 GMT 14 Feb 95

[Speech by President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih at a meeting with ulema, tribal chieftains, dignitaries, representatives

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of parties and mass organizations, and officials in al-Mukalla in the Hadhramaut Governorate on 12 February; from the "News Follow-ups" program"—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Your eminence the ulema, the brother tribal chieftains, dignitaries, [words indistinct], men of the Armed and Security Forces, [words indistinct], organizations, and political parties. Good evening. Many happy returns of the day. [passage omitted]

There are strategic and important issues; namely, preserving the sovereignty of the Yemeni homeland and safeguarding Yemen's dignity. We can kneel only to God Almighty. We will not kneel to (?anyone). [words indistinct] the use of force. We kneel only to God Almighty. Dear brothers: These are the main (?concerns). We came to the region and visited our neighbors, the brothers in the Sultanate of Oman and the United Arab Emirates. Prior to the month of Ramadan, I, along with a number of officials, visited some European states and met with officials in some foreign states. We sensed complete understanding by the international public opinion regarding the problems Yemen is suffering.

[Words indistinct] we are for dialogue. We are for (?understanding) and (?against) the use of force. We are against using, resorting to, or (?threatening) to use force. We are for dialogue. There are agreements which organize these relations with (?our neighbors) in Saudi Arabia. They include the al-Ta'if agreement, which was signed by al-Imam Yahya and King 'Abd-al-'Aziz in 1934.

Despite all the negative aspects of the [al-Ta'if] agreement, we announced to the world that we accept it as the basis of negotiations with the brothers and as an integrated package which cannot be selective [words indistinct] with all its positive and negative aspects. [Words indistinct] within the framework of dialogue. [Words indistinct] we wish them security, stability, happiness, and prosperity. [Words indistinct] [passage omitted]

It is a grace from God that we are Muslim brothers. This is a good opportunity to meet and talk with you. Things are alright and good. [Words indistinct] hard living, soaring prices, and high cost of living. However, I tell you that this is the course of the conspiracy. [Passage omitted]

However, we should make sure that we will continue our struggle to entrench security and stability and end the bribes, corruption, chaos, and (?suffering), so the best, most qualified, sincere, and honest person is appointed. We should also correct our own mistakes before others rebel against us. [Passage omitted]

This is our battle. Both the battle and the path are very long. We, however, should not despair [words indistinct] the tendentious calls. We all should cooperate as one family and as a united (?country) [words indistinct] take pride in you. In fact, even the tendentious ones take pride in you.

We have only good intentions toward our people and army in Saudi Arabia. We do not want to fight against our brothers in Saudi Arabia. The Saudi people are brothers, and we will not fight against our army in Saudi Arabia. It is our army and we take pride in its strength, capabilities, and resources which will be employed in the future, God willing, to serve the interest of the Arab and Islamic nation. We are not enemies, and we are not against our people in Saudi Arabia. A dialogue [words indistinct] between us and them [words indistinct] religious rulings or we will bring the case to the international security courts. If their claimed rights are verified, they can exercise them. [Words indistinct] [passage omitted]

Delegation To Stay in Riyadh Until Accord Reached

MM1402115895 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 13 Feb 95 pp1, 4

[Report by Sulayman Nimr: "Saudi-Yemeni Negotiations Close to Producing Memorandum of Understanding"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Riyadh—Riyadh and Sanaa have agreed to continue the negotiations which Saudi and Yemeni delegations have been holding in the Saudi capital for the past three weeks until they complete their task and reach agreement on a joint memorandum of understanding between the two countries.

Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, speaker of the Yemeni House of Representatives and head of the Yemeni delegation now in Riyadh, told AL-HAYAH: "We will remain in the Kingdom until agreement is reached on a joint concept and memorandum of understanding." Shaykh al-Ahmar, however, expected the Saudi and Yemeni teams to complete their work this week. [passage omitted]

Salih Receives Message From Bahraini Amir

JN1402130895 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 14 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Brother President Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih has received a message from his brother Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, amir of the State of Bahrain, on fraternal bilateral ties, regional developments, chief among which are the ongoing border negotiations between our country and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and issues of interest to our Arab and Islamic nation.

Three Arrested Following Murder of YSP Figure

NC1502104895 Paris AFP in English 0845 GMT 15 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sanaa, Feb 15 (AFP)—Yemeni police have arrested three people over the killing of a senior member of the Yemen Socialist Party (YSP), Shaykh 'Ali Jamil.

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Police said Wednesday [15 February] the murder of Shaykh Jamil in the al-Jiraf region on Friday was not politically-motivated, but was rather "a settling of scores."

Shaykh Jamil had been accused of killing two relatives of the suspects in a shoot-out during the April 1993 parliamentary election campaign, police said.

A member of the YSP political bureau, Abdallah Baydar, said Sunday that Shaykh Jamil was involved in a political feud with Shaykh Hamid 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, son of the Yemeni parliament speaker who heads the fundamentalist al-Islah party.

Shaykh Jamil was the YSP candidate in the Dhulaymah constituency in northern Yemen in the elections, while Shaykh Hamid stood for al- Islah.

After Shaykh Hamid's election victory clashes broke out between the YSP and al-Islah in the area in which 25 people died and 50 were wounded, Baydar said.

Before the May-July 1994 civil war the YSPO said more than 150 of its activists had been assassinated.

The YSP, formerly the main southern party, was ousted from the ruling coalition in Sanaa after the northern victory in the civil war.

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Kurdish Official: Irbil 'Could Explode Any Moment'

MM1402153495 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 11 Nov 95 p 6

[Report by Kamran Qurrah Daghi: "Salim: Situation in Irbil Explosive; United States Favors Withdrawal of Gunmen"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London—Jawhar Namiq Salim, speaker of the Iraqi Kurdistan region's parliament, believes that the situation in Irbil "could explode at any moment" despite the "half-truce" that has prevailed since the visit to the region by a U.S. delegation headed by David Laite, director of the Northern Gulf Bureau at the U.S. State Department [name and title as published], at the end of last month.

Salim, who is a member of the Political Bureau of the Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP] (led by Mas'ud Barzani), said that forces of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] (led by Jalal Talabani) "are still occupying the city but are besieged by KDP forces only kilometers away. Hence the fear of an outbreak of fighting, so long as that situation continues."

In a telephone statement to AL-HAYAH in London from his headquarters in the parliament, he said that the attempts to end the fighting were continuing. He mentioned the mediation of Ahmad al-Jalabi, chairman of the Executive Council of the Unified Iraqi National Congress [UINC]. He said that the leaderships of both parties had reservations regarding several provisions and stipulations in the "plan of al-Jalabi" who "hopes to come up with a draft acceptable to both sides."

He said that the disagreement was mainly over the interpretation of the word "eviction" included in the draft in relation to the "two options of complete eviction of gunmen from Irbil or having an equal armed presence for both sides." He added that "the Americans favored the second option provided that such a presence is small." He also said that customs revenues were another point of disagreement between the two parties "with the PUK requesting that the customs department and royalties should be handed over to the (Kurdish) Government immediately and the KDP linking that to the formation of a new government."

Salim expressed concern about continuation of the current situation in Irbil. He said that "in practical terms, there is no longer a government and there are no institutions, and the reasons are known." He said that 59 deputies were continuing their sit-in in parliament demanding an end to the fighting "but the main highway (Highway 60) leading to the parliament is controlled by PUK forces." He added that "after some protests," the PUK dismantled some control posts which "it had set up near the fence directly surrounding the parliament." He continued: "I personally cannot travel and move freely. I can only do that as part of the Higher Follow-up Committee and in the company of al-Jalabi, its chairman." He also said that the members of the KDP's parliamentary bloc were also not free and that 14 deputies from that bloc "including the deputy prime minister, the awqaf and justice ministers, the governor of Irbil, the director of public security, some leading party members, and others suffered looting or impounding of their homes, some of them no more than a few hundred meters from the parliament building and some adjacent to the prime minister's home."

He stressed that there is a "crisis" in Irbil where the situation "is tense with the presence of armed gangs." He said that the PUK "has begun to collect taxes from the rich and control the services and has cut off the telephone lines to hundreds of homes because their owners support the KDP." He said that "trade is at a standstill and 90 percent of the stores are closed."

He denied that his party had imposed an economic blockade on Irbil but he said that the main road from Salah-al-Din to the city passes through an area between Mulla 'Umar and Shawis which is a "killing area because forces of both sides face one another there, and fire was opened on me and al-Jalabi more than once when our motorcade passed through while were were acting in the context of the Follow-up Committee." That situation, he said, "makes many truck drivers refuse to enter Irbil because that would mean passing through that area."

Opposition Forces Said To Attack Army Units in South

NC1402164795 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1530 GMT 14 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] According to eyewitnesses arriving from south Iraq, Iraqi opposition forces launched a major attack on the Iraqi forces stationed in Hawr al-Hawizah in southeast Iraq. After fierce clashes between the two sides, a large number of earth barriers and small dams, which the Iraqi regime erected to dry up the marshes, were blown up. The eyewitnesses said that after the clashes the regime placed its forces on maximum alert and moved new forces to the marsh area to reinforce its positions there.

Kurd Forces Secure Release of Abducted Professor

MM1502101695 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 15 Feb 95 p 4

[Unattributed report: "University Professor Abducted in Irbil Released"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—A spokesman for the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, led by Jalal Talabani, has announced that security services in Irbil, capital of Iraqi Kurdistan, have been able to secure the release of a prominent Kurdish university professor who was abducted last Saturday. The spokesman told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT over the telephone yesterday that Dr. Sa'di al-Barzanji, dean of

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the Law and Politics Faculty at Salah-al-Din University in Irbil, "was found with a group of his students who abducted him because of his decision to suspend studies at the faculty." The spokesman added that local security forces "arrested the abductors and are now interrogating them."

The Kurdistan Democratic Party accused Talabani's party of arresting Dr. al-Barzanji following his meeting with Kurdish parliamentarians staging a sit-in in local parliament in protest at the infighting between the two parties' militias.

Rival Kurdish Parties' Militias Resume Clashes

MM1402144795 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 14 Feb 95 p 5

[Report by 'Adnan Husayn: "Clashes Between Barzani's and Talabani's Militias; Prominent Kurdish University Professor Disappears]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Kurdistan Democratic Party, led by Mas'ud Barzani, has accused its rival, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK], led by Jalal Talabani, of violating an undeclared truce which began three weeks ago after a whole month of fighting between their armed militias, which are fighting for influence and power in the Iraqi Kurdish areas that are not under the control of the central authority in Baghdad.

A spokesman for Barzani's party in London told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT yesterday that PUK militias launched last night [as published] and yesterday morning three attacks on the party's positions in the north and northeast of Irbil, capital of Iraqi Kurdistan. But a spokesman for the PUK has denied these accusations, saying that Barzani's militias started the attacks, which were repulsed by Talabani's militias. [passage omitted]

The spokesman for Barzani's party also accused Talabani's militias, which took control of Irbil a week after the fighting began, of abducting a prominent Kurdish university professor and holding him in an unknown area. The spokesman said that Dr. Sa'di al-Barzanji, dean of the Law and Politics Faculty at Salah-al-Din University in Irbil and also a prominent Iraqi figure in the field of law and legislation, who is close to Barzani's party, "was abducted by PUK forces at 1530 hrs last Saturday." [passage omitted]

The spokesman said that the objective behind this action is "to intimidate and terrorize (Kurdish) intellectual circles, which feel discontent at the military coup attempt made by Talabani's party."

In a statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT over the telephone yesterday a spokesman for Talabani's party denied these accusations, saying that Barzani's forces "started the attacks, hence forcing PUK forces to engage in the fighting to repulse the attacks. He described the accusations made by the Barzani party's spokesman as "a distortion of the facts and the reality—which helps to achieve nothing except to continue the fighting and harm the peace efforts."

Regarding the incident of Dr. al-Barzanji's abduction, the spokesman said that "security services in Irbil, which belong to Talabani's party, are staging a large-scale operation to search for Dr. al-Barzanji," whom he said "unknown people abducted in one of Irbil's streets a few days ago." [passage omitted]

U.S. Calls For Cease-Fire

JN1402221695 Baghdad AL-'IRAQ in Arabic 2 Feb 95 pp 1,6

[Unattributed follow-up report: "Spy al-Jalabi Communicates the Orders of his Masters to the Agents"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the follow-up reports which we published over the past few days, we gave details of the fighting which is taking place between agents in the autonomous region as well as the burglary and plunder of government departments and citizens' homes, and affirmed that the agents will continue fighting one another so long as they have not agreed on how to share the property which they have stolen. Events have now confirmed what we have expected. The fighting has escalated anew and Irbil is still being besieged and bombarded from time to time. A citizen, who has fled from Irbil and arrived in Baghdad, has confirmed that he and his dependents could not leave their home for several days as it was unsafe to go out into the streets, where shooting continued day and night. This is the picture of the situation in Irbil.

Agent Jalal Talabani has continued his propaganda campaign against the leadership of the so-called Democratic Party of Kurdistan [KDP]. This campaign has gone beyond the current KDP leadership to include the leadership of Mulla Mustafa Barzani. In a speech broadcast over his radio on 29 January 1995, Jalal said that the Barzani leadership has put an end to the Kurdish Revolution. He justified that by saying that this leadership continues to steal property in order to use it for personal reasons.

The agents have reached this nasty situation and bloody conflict between them because they placed themselves at the service of the Americans and all the enemies of Iraq, such as appointing agent Ahmad al-Jalabi as their leader when they know that he is an American agent and spy and an international thief who is wanted by Interpol. The behavior of agents Jalal and Mas'ud and the leaders of the perishing Communist Party confirms once again that they are enemies of the Kurdish people, because these agents have strongly defended agent Ahmad al-Jalabi in the past and mobilized all their news media in order to refute the charges that he is a U.S. agent and America's man in the region.

If agents Jalal and Mas'ud defend al-Jalabi on the basis that this guarantees them a steady flow of funds, we do not know why the Communist Party continues to defend

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Ahmad al-Jalabi to the extent of dismissing a party member from his post, because he criticized agent 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Safi for receiving money from Ahmad al-Jalabi and considered that the Communist Party had received money from the United States. However, agent 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Khabit began philosophizing matters by saying that the money was a gift for the Communist Party from the leader of the Iraqi opposition!!!

Many are the statements which are made by agents. But agent Ahmad al-Jalabi wanted his statement on 28 January 1995 to the parliamentarians who are staging a sit-in strike at the Kurdistan parliamentary building, as broadcast by the radio of agent Jalal on 29 January 1995, to be an open letter and message to those who defend him by refuting the charge that he is a U.S. agent.

The striking parliamentarians confirm that all that has taken place in the region is against the Kurdish people. Their sit-in has continued since the beginning of the recent fighting. Let us now hear what agent al-Jalabi told them.

The radio of agent Jalal says that al-Jalabi affirmed that "the competent circles in the U.S. Government held a meeting 10 days ago in the State Department and decided to send a delegation under the chief of the Northern Gulf Affairs Section on behalf of the U.S. National Security Council in order to convey a message to the Kurdish leaders and the Iraqi National Congress."

This was the statement of agent al-Jalabi, who wanted to prove to everyone that he is still America's man in the autonomous region and to respond to the criticisms which are being directed against him by other agents who are "struggling in London" that he is a failure in everything even in his family life.

Al-Jalabi continued his statement to announce openly that the Americans had communicated to him three orders which must be carried out by everyone. These orders are:

—Achievement of an immediate cease-fire.
—U.S. declaration of its support for the Iraqi National Congress.
—If an agreement is not reached and clashes resume, the United States will reconsider its participation in maintaining the no-fly zone over the Kurdistan region.

Let all agents, who have made al-Jalabi their leader, read the American commandments which confirm that Ahmad al-Jalabi is the chief U.S. agent who has dared to speak openly in order to frighten those who no longer abide by what he decides in his mediation to end the fighting.

The reason for seeking an end to the fighting is not the Kurdish people, but the threat to U.S. interests as confirmed by the radio of the withering Communist Party on 30 January 1995 which used al- Jalabi's statements as material for its "revolutionary propaganda."

This is the situation which has prompted tens of thousands of our Kurdish people to stage demonstrations against the continuation of the fighting, declare their solidarity with 49 members of the intelligentsia in Irbil who threatened to burn themselves alive, and raised slogans calling on the advocates of internecine fighting to burn themselves instead of the intelligentsia. The 49 figures include writers, artists, and journalists. One of them, 'Adnan al- Mufti, said that men of religion prevented them from burning themselves by issuing a dictum considering their action as wanting to commit suicide which is banned by Islam. He said that among those who threatened to burn themselves alive are: Khalid al- Hallaq, Kuran Jalal, Anwar Sulayman, Assu Hasan, and Tariq Jambaz.

Recent reports from the autonomous region confirm that fighting escalated anew yesterday and that the enemies have no choice but to flee to the countries for which they spy.

Commander, Iranian POW's Interviewed on Offensive

JN1502083895 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2040 GMT 14 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Al-'Amarah, 14 Feb (INA)—An INA and Baghdad radio and television team visited the Hawr al-Hawizah area near the Iraqi-Iranian border, which was the target of a large-scale Iranian offensive after midnight on 11 February.

The mission interviewed a number of military field commanders who emphasized that the offensive, in which all types of light and medium weapons were used, was a deliberate offensive by the Iranian regime. Fierce battles raged all day Saturday, during which the valiant Iraqi units managed to repulse the offensive and control the situation the next day. Massive losses were inflicted on the attacking Iranian forces and four people were captured, two of whom were Iranians.

The commander of the counteroffensive, who holds the rank of staff colonel, said a large Iranian force, using motorboats, launched a large-scale offensive along a 30-km front from 13 axes at 0300 on 11 February with the aim of occupying Iraqi territory in the Hawr al-Hawizah sector. He added that the attacking forces were provided with light and medium caliber weapons, including 120mm, 82mm, 80mm, and 60mm mortars and antitank and antipersonnel missiles.

He said fierce battles raged from one position to another between those forces that came from the direction of Iran and the Iraqi Armed Forces. All types of weapons were used, especially in Abu Dhakar and the embankments area in Hawr al-Hawizah. He added: Our forces, backed by tanks and rocket launchers, launched a surprise attack from three axes, using various types of weapons and inflicting massive human and material losses on the Iranian aggressors. All of our pure soil was

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purged from the invading force, which left behind in the battlefield its dead and humiliated weapons, including mortars, heavy machine guns, anti-armor rockets, and gunboats.

He emphasized that the situation was settled in favor of our valiant Armed Forces on the first axis at 1600 on 11 February and on the second axis at 0900 on 12 February. The pure Iraqi soil was completely purged on the third axis at 0600 on 12 February. Two columns commanded by the Hittin Forces were engaged. The first moved from the north along Saddat al-Dasam and the second from Lisan 'Ujayridah in the direction of the eastern al-Baydah triangle rampart.

The INA mission saw the medium and light weapons and equipment left by the Iranian forces on the battlefields during their unjust aggression on 11-12 February in Hawr al-Hawizah. It also saw a number of Iranian-made anti-armor Halutka [name as transliterated] rockets, BKS machine guns, RPG-7 rockets, 120mm, 82mm, 81mm, and 60mm mortars, antitank and antipersonnel mines, highly explosive TNT charges, gunboats equipped with medium and heavy machine guns, large quantities of Iranian-made ammunition, and rations.

The mission interviewed two Iranian prisoners who were arrested by our heroic Armed Forces. The two prisoners emphasized that the offensive was planned in advance by the Iranian regime. They told the mission that the Iranian regime had massed troops in the Dezful area and then moved them to Hawr al-Hawizah in Iraq under the supervision of high-ranking Iranian military commanders. They said the offensive was designed to occupy Iraqi territory and carry out acts of sabotage in Iraqi towns and villages.

Iranian prisoner Maytham Salmani, 21, a draftee in the Muhammad Rasul Allah Division, said the Iranian forces sustained massive human and material losses. Salmani, who lived in the Shamsabad area in the city of Dezful in the Ahvaz Province, said ranking Iranian military commanders supervised the military operations and mobilization of troops in the Dezful area and then Hawr al-Hawizah in Iraq.

Iranian prisoner of war Mu'ayyadi Ja'fari, 20, a draftee in the same Iranian division, who lived in Kheybar Street in the Iranian city of Shushtar, said the Iranian attack force was very large and added that he was captured by the Iraqi forces on 11 February.

Iranian 'Aggression' Said Part of U.S. 'Scheme'

JN1502100995 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0805 GMT 15 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 15 Feb (INA)—The newspaper AL-'IRAQ has stressed that the Iranian aggression against our units in Hawr al-Hawizah indicates one basic fact concerning the regime's suspect links to the U.S.-Zionist scheme, which seeks to subjugate and blackmail the region, control its resources, and expropriate its right.

In an editorial today, the paper says: It seems that the Iranian regime is still captive to its illusions and expansionist and aggressive ambitions. It also seems that that regime did not learn from its bitter experiences during its eight-year aggression against Iraq from which it reaped only defeat and humiliation.

AL-'IRAQ adds: If the Iranian regime thinks that the circumstances of the U.S.-Zionist aggression against Iraq may provide it with a new opportunity to bang against Iraq's solid wall, reality confirms, through tangible and established evidence, that the same iron will that buried the last Iranian aggression is now, and at any time in the future, able to smash and bury any reckless attempt by Tehran rulers to once again stage aggression against our country.

The paper notes that it is just as the Iraqis are scoring political and diplomatic victories for the sake of their just cause vis-a-vis the U.S. conspiracy, and while Iraq is succeeding in the battle to rebuild and reconstruct, that the treacherous Iranian aggression comes as part of the desperate and failed attempts to obstruct the march of crossing over [to victory].

The paper urges Tehran's rulers to return to their senses and to study in depth the state to which they have driven their peoples as a result of their disgraceful defeat in the glorious Saddam's al- Qadisiyah epic.

Minister Criticizes U.S. Position on UN Resolutions

JN1402153195 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1243 GMT 14 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Tunis, 14 Feb (INA)—Latif Nusayyif Jasim, [Iraqi] minister of labor and social affairs, has stressed that the U.S. position on the blockade imposed on Iraq is no longer based on the legal interpretation of the provisions of the resolutions issued against Iraq.

In a statement to the newspaper AL-SHURURQ published here today, Jasim accused the U.S. Administration of adopting a politically motivated and tendentious interpretation of the resolutions in order to prolong the siege. In this regard, he noted that U.S. agencies have gone beyond fabricating pretexts and justifications to prolong the blockade to bribing some quarters concerned with the review of the blockade imposed on the Iraqi people.

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Noting Iraq's commitment to international resolutions, Jasim said that Iraq's recognition of Kuwait, unprecedented in Iraq's political history, was supposed to be met with an immediate lifting of the blockade.

Concerning Resolution 687 and the reciprocal obligations between Iraq and the UN Security Council, Jasim said that Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687 stipulates the lifting of the ban imposed on Iraqi oil exports as soon as Iraq implements that paragraph, which deals with the destruction of the weapons of mass destruction. He said that Iraq has honored all its obligations while the Security Council has failed to honor its obligations.

He said that the next UN Security Council's review of the Iraq blockade will be a crucial occasion because all justifications and pretexts have been exposed and can no longer deceive anybone.

INA Cites Qatari Decision To Extend Sugar Aid

JN1202115395 Baghdad INA in English 0930 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Doha, Feb. 12 (INA)—Qatar has decided to send Iraq 2,500 tones of sugar as an aid to ease plight of its people who have been suffering from the U.N.-imposed blockade since August 6, 1990.

The Qatari News Agency said that the sugar which would be shipped to Umm Qasr Port in the southern Province of al-Basrah during the few days to come, was determined during an ordinary session of the Qatari cabinet held last Wednesday and chaired by the crown prince.

The Qatari decision came in the eve of an official visit by U.S. Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown to Doha as part of a tour in the Middle East countries.

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Crisis With Egypt Over NPT Signing Said Worsening

TA1502114695 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 15 Feb 95 p 12

[Report by Arye Bender and Hemi Shalev]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The crisis between Israel and Egypt over the latter's demand that Israel sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] continues to worsen.

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin yesterday told the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee that "a bad wind blows in the Egyptian Foreign Ministry." According to him, the Egyptians persist in demanding that Israel sign the NPT as a precondition for an improvement in its relations with the Arab world. "We have a serious dispute on the matter with Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa," Rabin said.

A shouting match erupted over the same issue in the four-way meeting in Washington between Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres and Musa. [passage omitted]

Another incident with the Egyptians occurred in the multilateral talks held recently in Morocco. Rabin told the Knesset committee yesterday that the diplomat heading the Egyptian delegation ordered Egyptian Army officers not to attend the meeting with their Israeli counterparts dealing with salvage operations at sea. Rabin also recounted that the Egyptian ambassador in Tanzania demanded that the Tanzanian president not resume diplomatic relations with Israel. Rabin estimated that all these steps were done "with President Mubarak's knowledge."

Peres on Negotiating With Palestinian Elections Victor

TA1402134195 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 14 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres said that as far as Israel is concerned there is no substitute for Yasir 'Arafat, even if Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] wins the elections in the territories. He stressed that Hamas supports terror and sends out suicide operators and that, therefore, there can be no negotiations with it.

Peres added that he is opposed to enforcing the law concerning the direct election of the prime minister. His remarks were reported by our correspondent Ilan Ro'e.

Rabin: Up to 2,400 Arab Suspects Recently Detained

TA1402161495 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 14 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin today revealed to the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee that Israel has recently placed some 2,000 to 2,400 Palestinian suspects under administrative detention and that a total of 5,000 to 6,000 suspects are currently incarcerated. He pointed out that Israel is not releasing prisoners and that the ministerial committee discussing prisoner releases has not recently convened.

Our correspondent Yo'el Nir reports that the prime minister stressed that Yasir 'Arafat has begun to realize that he must fight terror and uphold law and order. Mr. Rabin noted that he had clarified to 'Arafat that he expects the Palestinian Authority to impede terror, deal with illegal demonstrations, and arrest suspected perpetrators of terrorist attacks. According to him, it was made clear to the Palestinians that if they do not take real measures against terror Israel will not continue to implement the agreement with them.

He added that 'Arafat had recently tried to reach an agreement with Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Islamic Jihad whereby these two organizations would not engage in terror. The prime minister did not divulge whether 'Arafat's efforts were successful. Mr. Rabin recounted that he had asked 'Arafat why he does not bring the extremists he arrests to trial and that the PLO leader told him that Abu-Nidal [Sabri al-Banna] had sent a man to the Gaza Strip to assassinate him.

The prime minister pointed out that 38 Israelis were killed in suicide attacks in 1994 and 24 so far this year, most of them in the Bet Lid bombing.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1500 GMT on 14 February carries a related report by Knesset correspondent Hadar Vismonsky which adds: "Rabin believes that support for the political process exceeds 30 percent. Responding to recent reports Rabin said: All I did in the meeting with the Russian envoy was to present the findings of a poll I saw in the newspaper, and in any case, I will not conduct a policy based on polls.

["The prime minister lashed out at the Egyptians, saying that a bad wind—as he put it—blows in the Egyptian Foreign Ministry that makes them wage a struggle against Israel on the question of nuclear arms.

["Rabin said that the government has taken and continues to take action to prevent the recurrence of a massacre, such as the one that occurred in the Cave of the Patriarchs." In a recorded passage Rabin says: "If need be, we will also take measures against Israelis making statements to the Israeli media in support of the heinous act perpetrated by the murderer Goldstein. Such statements constitute incitement to murder, and the legal and law-enforcement authorities must deal with them."

[The report goes on to say that the prime minister "made it clear that the government is committed to safeguard the security of all inhabitants of Judaea and Samaria, both Jews and non-Jews."]

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Sharon Urges Tough Measures Against Suicide Bombers

MS1502100695 London THE TIMES in English 15 Feb 95 p 13

[Report on interview with Ariel Sharon, member of Likud opposition party, by Christopher Walker; date not given]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tel Aviv—Ariel Sharon, the former Israeli Defence Minister and prominent member of the main rightwing Likud opposition party, yesterday outlined a draconian plan for dealing with Islamic terrorism, including the deportation of the families of Palestinian suicide bombers and helicopter assaults on the newly autonomous Gaza Strip.

"The families of these 'human bombs' should be brought from the Palestinian-controlled areas or those we control and deported to Lebanon or to Sudan, where there are Palestinians now training with Hamas (the Islamic Resistance Movement)," Mr Sharon said. "They could also be taken to other places where Hamas train. There are many possibilities. Let us start with the close families. I am sure that will bother them."

Mr Sharon, speaking as opinion polls showed a huge swing to the Right in advance of the general election next year, emphasised that Israel should immediately abandon the peace process, which even the Labour Government admits now has only 35 per cent public support, and launch an operation to "eliminate" leading members of groups such as Islamic Jihad and Hamas. He hinted that under Likud, Israel would take action abroad against leaders such as Fathi al-Shaqaqi, of Islamic Jihad, who gloated in interviews at his Syrian headquarters about last month's attack at Netanyu, in which 21 Jews were killed and 62 wounded. "The main target is not the boys," Mr Sharon said. "The problem is how to deal with those who convince them, those who preach to them, those who betray them."

In an angry 90-minute interview Mr Sharon claimed that intelligence existed to show that Yasir 'Arafat, the head of the new Palestinian National Authority, had "expressed joy" over reports that Jews were being killed in suicide attacks. Such operations have killed 50 Jews since October.

The burly reserve general, still regarded as a potential saviour by many blue-collar workers, outlined a security plan that is likely to cause unease among Western governments anxious to maintain the peace accord signed in Washington 17 months ago. He emphasised that the Israeli Government would have to seize back the right to "hot pursuit" in areas under Palestinian self-rule and to pre-emptive action, which he said had been surrendered by Yitzhaq Rabin, the Labour Prime Minister.

"I am not going to give a lesson in anti-terror warfare," said Mr Sharon, 66, a consistent opponent of the peace deal. "But you can take it for granted that there is a possibility to bring this terror to an end, or to reduce it to such a degree that life could be normal again. We are paying the price for the past seven years, when the steps which should have been taken were ignored."

Mr Sharon said he was reconsidering his challenge to divide the Right, which he made last May when he declared his candidature for the post of Prime Minister, which will be elected directly for the first time next year. "It is too early to say whether I will be standing," he said, sparking speculation that he has done a deal with Benjamin Netanyahu, the Likud leader, which will grant him a top post in any right-wing administration. Mr Netanyahu is 22 years younger than Mr Sharon.

"Because of the weakness of the Government, the terrorists in Gaza have been allowed to feel victorious," Mr Sharon said, referring to recent television pictures that have shocked the Jewish public. "If the heads of Hamas are allowed to meet openly, dancing on the Israeli flag, armed and with the leaders preaching to kill more Jews, that is exactly the right moment that somebody should come there. They should be shown that things like that are not done."

Mr Sharon said there should be a larger Israeli security sweep in Gaza and Jericho, in which house-to-house searches for arms would be mounted and "wanted terrorists" taken back to Israel for trial. "Mr 'Arafat should be asked to join in. If he does not wish to, his forces should be confined to barracks while the operation is in progress."

Asked if he was concerned that such action would destroy the Israeli-PLO accord, Mr Sharon said: "This agreement is supposed to provide security, but if instead it brings bloodshed and many more casualties, who needs this peace?"

Riots Erupt on Cave of Patriarchs Massacre Anniversary

TA1402155195 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 14 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] An Arab youth was killed and five others were injured when soldiers opened fire at stone-throwers in the al-Fawwar refugee camp south of Hebron. There have been riots in the camp since this morning in view of the anniversary of the massacre at the Cave of the Patriarchs.

In the cave itself, the prayers and ceremony in memory of the victims of the massacre have ended. 'Abd-al-Hafiz Ashhab, the Palestinian Authority's official in charge of communications, said in the ceremony that Israel's policy is conducive to disaster and that support for the peace agreement in the territories is decreasing by the day.

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Rioting Dies Down Due to Rain

TA1502122595 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 15 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Rioting continued throughout the morning in Hebron, but there were no reports of casualties. [Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1105 GMT on 15 February reports that "the rioting died down when heavy rains hit the Hebron area."]

In Ramallah, a 16-year-old youth from al-Birah was lightly wounded when hit by rifle shots. Our police affairs correspondent Aviv Bushinsky quotes eyewitnesses as saying the shots were fired from an Israeli vehicle traveling by the al-Usfiyah school where the youth was located. The police have opened an investigation.

Settlers, Police Clash Over Levinger Arrest

TA1502092395 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 15 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Last night, the Palestinian Police arrested attorney Raji al-Surani, a human rights activist in Gaza, after he criticized the establishment of a new military court in Gaza. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports it is rumored in Gaza that al-Surani was due to present an appeal to the Supreme Court in Gaza seeking the release of Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Shami, the Islamic Jihad leader. Al-Surani is close to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

Arabs are now rioting near Hebron's Cave of the Patriarchs. Our correspondent Dani Zaqen reports that the rioters are stoning soldiers.

The police detained seven settlers at Hebron's Avraham Avinu neighborhood when they came to escort Miryam Levinger to court. Among the detainees are her husband Rabbi Moshe Levinger. Commander Eli Kron, the Judaea and Samaria commander, said that the police arrived in force at the Levinger home because Rabbi Levinger threatened to stone the policemen if they came to arrest his wife. Commander Kron said Levinger made the threat during an attempt yesterday by police to work something out with the family.

Levinger Couple Released

TA1502134295 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 15 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Jerusalem Magistrate's Court released the Levinger couple at noon today. The two are suspected of attacking a police officer, a policeman, and a border policeman approximately 10 months ago. Since that time, the two have ignored repeated summonses to court. Our correspondent Aviv Bushinsky reports that Mrs. Levinger refused to enter the court, claiming she does not recognize the court's authority. Six policemen forcibly dragged her inside the courtroom, and she heard the proceedings while sitting on the floor. The trial will be continued in four months.

Commentary Urges Change to Oslo Approach

TA1302123795 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 13 Feb 95 p 2

[Commentary by Shim'on Schiffer: "Even Peres Is Worried"]

[FBIS Translated Text] We have heard about the birth of the "peace bloc"—or as Rabin put it, "the Cairo bloc"—only from the Israeli partners to this concept. Peres and Rabin, in this order, last week enthusiastically talked of the new regional coalition striving toward peace and solving the bloody conflict between Israelis and Arabs.

Yesterday the Middle East troupe wandered on for a Washington appearance. Clinton and the heads of the U.S. Administration were recruited to participate in the occasion as guest stars, in another bid to revive a dying process.

It is entirely possible, however, that precisely when Foreign Minister Peres and Nabil Sha'th were arguing over the contents of the joint statement, the next suicide terrorist was being groomed for action in Gaza's mosques. Even Shim'on Peres, an incorrigible optimist, sounded extremely worried yesterday: "The situation is much graver than people think," he said. For the first time he spoke about "an extremely dangerous mine field" surrounding all those involved in the negotiations.

Rabin and 'Arafat signed the historic declaration of reconciliation between the two nations on the White House lawn. Those who attended yesterday's meeting now fear—as do all those who have been following anxiously the first steps of the newborn babe—that yesterday they attended the babe's funeral ceremony.

The hostility between Israelis and Palestinians is profound to the point that the two parties cannot even put on a brief show of unity under the auspices of their American host. The lesson is that only when people in Jerusalem realize that the time has come for new thinking and a different approach than that adopted in Oslo, will it be possible to further the negotiations with the Palestinians.

As Rabin put it, "there are no sacred dates." Who said that the Oslo agreement is sacred?

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King Asserts 'No Ambitions Outside Jordan'

JN1402215495 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 14 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] His Majesty King Husayn has emphasized that Jordan continues to support all Arab brothers in order to reach a just and comprehensive peace in this part of the world that suffered much as a result of instability throughout previous decades.

At a meeting with the representatives of Arab and International news agencies in Amman, in the presence of Her Majesty Queen Nur at al-Ma'wa Palace this evening, his majesty added that when Jordan concluded the peace treaty, it was based on the same terms of reference that were approved at the Madrid conference in order to realize just and comprehensive peace.

His Majesty King Husayn emphasized that Jordan has no ambitions outside Jordan, and that it aims to realize a better situation for the peoples of the region and entrench stability and security in it. As for Jerusalem, he said Jordan's care for the holy shrines there is based on a previous commitment that was approved by the concerned parties, including the Palestinian brothers, until the circumstances become available for them to exercise their sovereignty over Jerusalem through the final status negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, which according to the Palestinian- Israeli agreement, will begin in 1996, and will deal with Jerusalem, settlements, and some other issues. In light of this agreement, Jordan will continue to take care of the Islamic shrines.

His majesty said the historic role in Jerusalem is fully harmonious with the requirements of international laws and norms.

The meeting was attended by Their Highness Prince Hamzah Bin-al- Husayn; and Talal Bin-Muhammd, military secretary of his majesty the king; Her Highness Princess Ghayda' Talal; al-Sharif Zayd Bin- Shakir, prime minister; Marwan al-Qasim, Royal Hashemite Court chief; Dr. Khalid al-Karaki, deputy prime minister and information minister.

Paper Urges U.S. Pressure on Israel To 'Rescue' Peace

JN1102095695 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 11 Feb 95 pp 1, 23

[Editorial: "Just Peace, or Stalemate"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The failure of the Rabin-'Arafat meeting to resolve the problems facing completion of the implementation of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement is a dangerous signal that threatens that the peace process on the Palestinian track is heading toward a stalemate that endangers the whole peace process.

Israel wants a peace that meets all its demands. At the same, it time ignores the basic legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and the Oslo and Cairo agreements. This means that what has been realized is no more than an incomplete peace that will not last for long.

The continued closure of the West Bank, the refusal to release detainees, and the insistence on continuing to expand Jewish settlements reflect a form of intransigence that causes more suffering and hardship for Palestinians. This will increase extremism, violence, and resistance in order to restore rights and human dignity.

The closure enforced after the Bet Lid operation brings harshness and harm that the Palestinian people cannot endure. This measure has no political justification except exploiting and employing the incident for more gains at the expense of the Palestinians and their continuous tragedy under occupation.

It is noted at this very time that Israel employs all its political capabilities to conclude economic and commercial agreements, and at the same time it obstructs the peace process by its intransigence, measures, and its endless demands of more concessions. This shows that Israel is unwilling to reach comprehensive and lasting peace agreement in the region, and this has results on the other tracks.

The measures realized in the field of regional economic cooperation during the meeting of the economic ministers of Jordan, Egypt, the Palestinians, the United States, and Israel have been an advance step on the peace road. However these measures will remain incomplete and mere ideas and figures on paper unless they coincide with parallel measures on the political level, especially implementing the agreement with the Palestinians.

In light of the failure of the European troika delegation to make any progress and the warning by French Foreign Minister Juppe of the danger of stalemate and collapse of the peace process, the United States should move more seriously in order to rescue this process and stop the destructive effects of this situation on the other tracks. The United States is the only party that is able to employ pressure on Israel and force it to abide by the peace agreements.

The security considerations, which Israel uses as a pretext to go further in its hardline positions, are unjustified because security is not for one side but for all sides. Collective security cannot be realized through closure, starving, repression, more arrests, and a refusal to complete the peace steps. It is realized through practical implementation, pursuing the principles of right and justice, and giving the peoples their freedom, and creating the chances of free and honorable life on the ground.

As for fanaticism, pressure, and the circumvention of reality, they only lead to more hatred and abortive self-rule. This is something rejected by the Palestinians, who struggled for long to realize their ambitions and political aspirations of self- determination, an independent state, and a free and honorable life in their homeland.

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Paper: No Peace With Arabs Without Peace With Palestinians

JN1202114795 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 12 Feb 95 pp 1, 28

[Editorial: "Peace With Palestinians Toward Deadlock"]

[FBIS Translated Text] It seems that the peace process between Israel and the Palestinian National Authority [PNA] has reached a real deadlock.

The official spokesman of the PNA said in a statement after the authority's weekly meeting yesterday that Israel deliberately and insistently puts obstacles in the way of the peace process and ignores the Declaration of Principles, the dates set for the redeployment of the Israeli Army, and the holding of legislative elections for a national council to run the territories from which the occupation authorities were supposed to withdraw and hand over powers to the PNA. The spokesman also said that Israel also sticks to its position on the transfer of powers and the release of Palestinian prisoners and detainees.

With all arrogance and intransigence, Yitzhaq Rabin declares that the dates for the redeployment of forces, elections, and release of prisoners are not sacred, and what concerns Israel first is security and putting an end to what it calls terrorism and acts of violence.

The whole world realized these facts and is aware of the Israeli position, which rejects peace and all the resolutions of international legitimacy. This was what was expressed last Friday by Alain Juppe, French foreign minister and head of the European delegation that visited the region in the past few days and met with all parties concerned with the peace process.

In face of this blackmailing and immoral position by the Israeli leaders, the Arabs and all world states that have faith in peace and the right of the peoples to self-determination should condemn the Israeli obstinacy and force the Israeli rulers to bow to the international will and implement the agreements and documents to which they committed themselves. Otherwise, the region will not witness real peace and the peoples of the region will not enjoy the security they seek. There will be no peace with the Arabs without peace with the Palestinians, because the Palestine question is the crux of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The Israeli failure to recognize the Palestinian Arab people's right to self-determination on their land and their right to live in security and stability in an independent state in which they practice sovereignty over their own lands and property means that peace will not survive and the region will remain a hotbed of conflicts and acts of violence until something already decided by God is accomplished.

Priority To Be Given to 'Stranded' Palestinians in Talks

JN1302085195 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 13 Feb 95 p 12

[Article by JORDAN TIMES staff reporter P.V. Vivekanand]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—Jordan will give priority to ensuring the return home of several thousand Palestinians "stranded" in Jordan during talks this month on the repatriation of Palestinians displaced during the 1967 war, according to senior officials and negotiators.

The estimated 60,000 to 80,000 Palestinians are different from the 900,000 or so Palestinians classified as "displaced" during the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, the officials explained.

The Israeli occupation authorities have denied them entry to their homeland after their post-1967 Israeli-issued permits expired.

"They cannot be classified as displaced persons since they were not displaced. They were permanent residents of the occupied territories even after the 1967 war whose exit and entry permits expired while they were outside their homeland," said a senior official.

"When you discuss the subject with the Israelis, they show all enthusiasm and you get a feeling that things would be done quickly," said the official. "But we have seen little practical action despite our repeated efforts," added the official, who preferred anonymity.

According to a Jordanian negotiator with Israel, most of these people were either studying in Jordan or elsewhere, expatriates in the Gulf or visitors to the Kingdom or other countries who could not return to the West Bank before their permits expired.

"The whole idea of denying them entry is ridiculous," added the negotiator, who also spoke on condition of anonymity. "But then, we have to deal with the reality that it is better to look forward and seek a solution to the problem rather than engage in polemics."

According to the official and the negotiator, Jordan will focus on the return home of this category of Palestinians as a priority during a meeting in Amman this month of Foreign Minister 'Abd-al- Karim al-Kabariti, Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Political Department head Faruq Qaddumi.

"It is clear that the return of these people would not pose any social or housing problems in the West Bank since they were living there until recent years," noted the negotiator, referring to Israel's argument against allowing the return of large numbers of Palestinians.

The Arab sides to the talks met in Cairo early this month in a bid to coordinate their stands ahead of the meeting

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with Israel. Details of the coordinated strategy have not been revealed except that the three—Jordan, Egypt, and the PLO—had drawn up specific proposals and timetables for the return of the displaced.

Under the Sept. 13, 1993, Declaration of Principles signed by Israel and the PLO, the issue of "displaced" Palestinians will be discussed and resolved among the four parties.

Article XII of the Declaration of Principles states under the heading Liaison and Cooperation with Jordan and Egypt:

"The two parties will invite the governments of Jordan and Egypt to participate in establishing further liaison and cooperation arrangements between the government of Israel and the Palestinian representatives, on the one hand, and the governments of Jordan and Egypt, on the other hand, to promote cooperation between them. These arrangements will include the constitution of continuing (permanent) committee that will decided by agreement on the modalities of admission of persons displaced from the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967, together with necessary measures to prevent disruption and disorder, other matters of common concern will be dealt with in this committee."

The Jordanian negotiator said the Kingdom "fully agreed with the stipulation that measures should be taken to prevent disruption and disorder" as the displaced return home. "We are as anxious as anyone to ensure that order is maintained throughout the process," said the negotiator.

Jordanian officials note that His Majesty King Husayn has repeatedly affirmed that no Jordanian of Palestinian origin would be forced to make a choice between returning to the West Bank or remaining in the Kingdom.

"It is a matter of free will and choice of the individual concerned, and Jordan would not ask anyone to leave the country or deny anyone the right to leave the Kingdom as and when such a choice is available," said the official.

Interior Minister Receives Amnesty International Team

JN1102183995 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Interior Minister Salamah Hammad today received an Amnesty International delegation comprising Mrs. Joan Ray [name as transliterated], director of the Middle East Program at the International Secretariat of Amnesty International, and Dr. 'Abd-al-Muta'al Qarshab, coordinator of Middle East development at the International Secretariat of Amnesty International.

During the meeting, they discussed cooperation between the Interior Ministry and Amnesty International. The interior minister stressed to the guest delegation that he supports the noble objectives which Amnesty International seeks to achieve as well as the Jordanian Government's commitment to the international agreements and charters on human rights, which were previously signed.

The minister also promised to extend every possible assistance to the organization's International Secretariat as part of its efforts aimed to return things to normal in the Jordanian branch of Amnesty International.

The guest delegation thanked the Jordanian Government for its constant cooperation with Amnesty International and for the measures it is taking to foster respect for human rights.

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Al-Hirawi Cited on al-Asad Remarks on Golan, Peace

NC1402201595 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 14 Feb 95

[Report by Yazbik Wahbah at the Presidential Palace in B'abda—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] President al-Hirawi declared his position on the current developments during his meeting this evening with the Editors' Union Council. He noted that the issue of waste disposal should not be politicized. What we want to know is where the barrels have been buried so that we can stop them harming the citizens, he said. On the Cabinet reshuffle, President al-Hirawi said they did not discuss this matter during the recent Damascus summit. He also clarified that there are now, in Lebanon, 55,000 soldiers and around 20,000 security men ready to protect the south. He spoke about negotiations with the Americans to buy defense weapons for the Lebanese Army. Here are some of the remarks Doyen Karam cited al-Hirawi as saying:

[Begin Karam recording] [Words indistinct] President al-Hirawi that every time he comes back from Damascus there is much talk about a government reshuffle [words indistinct]. However, this subject was not discussed. We spoke about important matters. President al-Hirawi said that President al-Asad will not accept any concessions regarding the Golan Heights. He will not even accept 98 percent of the land, but wants 100 percent of the land back. He will not accept discussing the Golan issue without discussing the Lebanon issue and its south and western al-Biqa'.

Resolution 425 has to be implemented in full. Implementing this resolution cannot lead to a peace treaty. But the peace treaty is not the objective. The objective is Resolution 425. Lebanon will be the last to sign. No one will sign after Lebanon. This is the stance that was taken. There can be no Golan Heights without the south, nor can there be a south without the Golan Heights. This was the position taken by President al-Asad while we were there with him. The two issues are linked to each other, provided that this proposal is final and provided that there is no bargaining whatsoever. This is the Arab position.

Those who thought that the achievements they accomplished in a short period could bring them better results are deluded. The problems have started and we hear reports about these problems every day. [end recording]

The president of the Republic noted that Rabin and Peres always belittle the case of Lebanon and insist on ignoring Resolution 425. He added that those who started sponsoring the negotiations should have enough influence to make useful progress in these negotiations.

Regarding canceling political sectarianism, the president of the Republic said religion and state must be separated so that the future generations will not hold us accountable.

Nasrallah Threatens Anti-Israel Reprisals

NC1402162295 Beirut AL-'AHD in Arabic 3 Feb 95 p 3

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] On the anniversary of Imam al-Mahdi's birthday, the day of the oppressed, the Committee for Supporting the Islamic Resistance held a luncheon in honor of the Lebanese media men at al-Jinan Hall in Beirut on Friday [27 January]. Hizballah Secretary General al-Sayyid Hasan Nasrallah attended the ceremony. [passage omitted]

Nasrallah delivered a speech on this occasion in which he said: Since this resistance was launched after the Israeli invasion in 1982, it has made the liberation of the land and the removal of the occupation its objective. [passage omitted]

Referring to the American decision to freeze the assets of certain organizations and individuals, he said the measure has no material or financial effect, and it shows the spirit of hostility toward this nation. He noted that the United States failed to freeze Israel's assets after its air invasion of Lebanon, in which more than 150 Lebanese civilians were killed, hundreds others were wounded, some 500,000 people were displaced, and thousands of houses were destroyed.

He said the measure marks the beginning of a new American approach to confronting the forces of renaissance in the region. [passage omitted]

[In another 2,500-word report on page 4, Hizballah Secretary General Hasan Nasrallah is cited as telling an audience attending a celebration on 29 January to mark the passage of 40 days after the death of two Hizballah members in an explosion in Beirut's Southern Suburb: "The enemy strikes in the heart of the Southern Suburb and Islam strikes in the heart of Tel Aviv."

[The report adds: "Nasrallah asked: 'Who said the victims of the Sfayr bombing have become part of history? No, they are in the hearts, souls, memories, and minds of the mujahidin in Lebanon and Palestine. Let Rabin know once again that any form of aggression against our kinsfolk in the Southern Suburb, in the south, or inside Palestine will always have a heavy price to be paid from the Jews' blood, wounds, and bodies.'

["His eminence added: 'I tell you, our people, and our nation that the time when we were killed without us taking revenge has gone; the time when the blood of our people was shed while the Jews remained safe has gone; the time when our people in the south and Western al-Biqa' were displaced while the inhabitants of northern Palestine stayed in their colonies and settlements has gone; the time when we were killed in marketplaces and they were not has gone; and the time when the Israelis invaded our country as if they were on a picnic has gone.'"]

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Hizballah Paper Examines U.S. Actions

NC1402184995 Beirut AL-'AHD in Arabic 3 Feb 95 p 13

[Unattributed article: "Harming the Americans Is an Issue"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Every time Washington finds itself in a corner regarding the Lebanese issue, its trumpets assail the Lebanese people and their courageous resistance. Yesterday the United States preempted the arrival of the Lebanese security delegation, which was called "consultative," declaring that the time has not come to lift the ban on American nationals travelling to Lebanon and said it was because of threats posed by groups capable of harming American nationals.

Who are these groups? Certainly, the United States means groups of Lebanese people who are doing their duty, defending their land and people in the face of daily Zionist acts of aggression, specifically Hizballah. Washington has never concealed this. It has often repeated its request to disarm Hizballah and pressured the Lebanese Government to do all it can to end the resistance and give in to the Zionist enemy, consequently, turning the confrontation with the occupation into internal sedition with all its grave consequences.

The United States, which levels accusations of terrorism at any party that disturbs it, claims that Hizballah disrupts Lebanese security. But what did the United States do in Lebanon apart from commit crimes during the Lebanese war—setting off car bombs rigged by its intelligence, launching assassination attempts, and bombarding the Mountain and Beirut's Southern Suburb from its warships.

Despite the Lebanese people's agreement on social peace and security, the United States has not stopped trying to tamper with the security of the Lebanese people, from the Sayyidat al-Najah Church massacre, through the piracy in connection with the kidnapping of Mustafa al-Dirani, to the latest massacre in Sfayr in Beirut's Southern Suburb [when a car bomb went off earlier this year killing two Hizballah men] and the planting of spies and saboteurs in the Southern Suburb to terrorize and kidnap citizens. The United States supports Israel materially and morally in its aggression against peaceful citizens in their villages and in the massacre of women and children.

All the Lebanese people are harmed directly or indirectly by the United States but no one says anything or cares. But when an American is harmed this becomes an unforgivable crime. Everyone knows that they are here and go wherever they like and no one objects to that. So what does all this furor mean?

Fadlallah Refuses To Legitimize Israel

NC1502073195 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 15 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Ayatollah Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah has emphasized that we do not want war with anyone. However, he added, if they declare war against us, then let it be war. Anyone who declares war knows what it means for this war to break out everywhere, he said.

Fadlallah believes that the sweetness of the sectarian honeymoon has kept us preoccupied while Israel was biting off the land, the economy, politics, and security. He believes that the American dragon has opened its mouth to swallow the Lebanese, Arab, and Islamic being with their [word indistinct], politics, economy, and security.

Speaking at the annual fast-breaking banquet hosted by the al-Zahra' charity association yesterday, 'Allamah Fadlallah said: We reject Israel in part and parcel because it banished us from Palestine. I can never legitimize anyone who banishes me. Had the Jews who settled in Palestinian been mere citizens who coexisted with Muslims and Christians, there would have been no problem. But when Judaism turns into a state that banishes me, and even if the entire world recognizes it as legitimate, I will continue to be the Arab, Palestinian, and Muslim man who refuses to give legitimacy to Israel.

His eminence added: When it comes to America, we have no complex against it. Our complex is against the American colonialism in its new form.

Implications of Four-Way Summit Discussed

NC1502102995 Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 4 Feb 95 p 1

[Article by Chief Editor Talal Salman: "The Summit of Fear"—punctuation as published]

[FBIS Translated Text] The pillars of the "coalition of peace" climbed down from the peak that was their unprecedented quadripartite summit in Cairo. Each returned home, preceded by his unallayed foreboding and still surrounded by the fear that the special "collective communique" failed to calm. The "historic photo opportunity" did not eliminate their fears of the expected explosive consequences.

The summit failed to change the facts that predict widespread collapse and did not reduce the seething public anger. It might indeed have only provoked this anger further and given it ammunition.

The summit, with its modest results, appeared in its true light: "the summit of those afraid of the peace" not "the summit of those afraid for the peace."

The three Arab parties, most notably the chief of police, Yasir 'Arafat, are fearful of their "peace," particularly because Israel did not stop for an instant to ascertain that the peace is Israeli in its identity and responsive to Israel's security, military, and political needs as it promotes its imperial plans over the entire "new Middle East!"

It is a "peace" intolerant of its Arab signatories.

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It is a "peace" that threatens to kill off its Arab signatories.

The required salvation is "Israeli," meaning that it is of the same nature as the "peace" itself.

But who can hang the bell around Yitzhaq Rabin's neck?!

Who dares to ask him to do anything, let alone dictate it to him?

They only just "entreated" him to save his "peace" to remain safe, preserve the peace, and stay peacefully on their thrones!

While the "image" of the summit might be very useful to him domestically, it is expected to inflame domestic situations in the delegates' own countries. It is the domestic front that is the source of the danger after all.

In light of their emaciated gains, as specified by the "collective communique," they appeared like people who were jumping from the frying pan into the fire. All they could agree on with the Israeli was to stand against the advocates of change and the opponents of surrender in their countries. They made the same classification he makes, calling such people "terrorists and extremists," and passed a death sentence on them in his and their own names!

While the event was useful for Yitzhaq Rabin—who could now brag to his Israeli opposition that he had extracted a ruling or a fatwa from Arab and Islamic authorities to exterminate the Muslim and Arab opponents of his peace—it will certainly not reassure 'Arafat about his precarious position, increase the weak and confused Husni Mubarak's popularity, or open the currently closed prospects before the isolated and besieged King Husayn.

While Yitzhaq Rabin is threatened only with losing his post, they face death by assassination.

In Israel there are "institutions," political parties, and political forces on the right and the left that are and remain legal even when they oppose the government. They remain legal even when they oppose the government from within government ranks.

The worst that can befall Rabin is to be forced to hold a Cabinet reshuffle or agree to share power with his opponents within a new national unity government. At the very worst, he will only have to leave his position as prime minister.

But they [the other delegates] have replaced their institutions and states with their own personality cults, obstructed real political activity, repressed the public, and forced it to choose between supporting the government or dying in silence. This means that they have left the people with no option but to resort to arms, either by assassination or by total "explosion" in the form of a civil war.

Hence their fears are immeasurably deeper than Rabin's. This is particularly true when you consider that the "peace," the way it has been established, has been a definite Israeli gain. It will not fall or be abolished by Rabin's departure from power or by the departure of the Arab signatories, either by assassination or general rioting.

Al-Sadat departed, by assassination, but the Israeli peace remained to smother Egypt and add serious national implications to its economic and social crises.

They do not want to suffer al-Sadat's fate although they are following the same path he took. Indeed they have accepted conditions that are harsher than the ones he accepted. At the time they were considered unfair to Egypt and today would appear like conditions only extremists would stipulate!

While Rabin is wondering where the next fedayeen blow will be struck, 'Arafat and his two Arab partners in the summit are wondering when judgment will be passed.

Perhaps this is why the Lebanese people are afraid that they will be offered as a "sacrifice" to the pillars of the "peace summit" and that Lebanese territory will be the scene of a new Israeli military operation. Such an operation will only make the Israeli peace costlier than it was before the Cairo summit!

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League Chief Arrives, Notes Purpose of Visit

JN1302220095 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2115 GMT 13 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid arrived in Damascus at 2130 today on a visit to Syria. [passage omitted]

In a statement to a Syrian Arab News Agency correspondent, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid stressed that meetings, coordination, and the exchange of views with the brothers in Syria are important in the current circumstances. He said: My visit aims to prepare for the next Arab League Council session on 20 March on the League's 50th anniversary.

'Abd-al-Majid added that consultations with the brothers in Damascus are important in view of the visit's timing and the circumstance in which it takes place. He said the next Arab League session will be important and historic.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid noted that this visit is also important because it comes after the Alexandria summit, which marked a qualitative change in the current Arab conditions, and this is important as far as the Arab League is concerned.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said that during the visit, he will discuss Arab reconciliation. He said: This subject is now raised in the Arab arena and we are prepared to do all we can within the framework of the Arab League.

He stressed that Arab reconciliation is required in the current circumstances more than ever before. He said there is a mechanism which is being implemented in this regard, and there may be a chance in the Arab League's forthcoming session to discuss it. He said if there is a possibility to achieve it, then we will seek to do so.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said that during the visit, he will also discuss a draft agreement prepared by the Arab League aimed at turning the Middle East into a region free of all weapons of mass destruction which the Arab states will discuss in the next Arab League Council session on 20 March. He said: This draft is given top priority on the agenda of the League's Council session.

Al-Shar', 'Abd-al-Majid Discuss NPT

JN1402174195 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1640 GMT 14 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus, 14 Feb (SANA)—Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' received Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid this morning.

The meeting was attended by Yusuf Shakkur, assistant to the foreign minister; Ahmad 'Adil, assistant Arab League secretary general; and the director of the office of the Arab League secretary general.

During the meeting, they exchanged views on the best way to invigorate the Arab League's role and institutions, especially at this fateful time.

The foreign minister reviewed the steps and measures Syria is taking to mark the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Arab League.

The meeting also dealt with the Arab situation in general and stressed the importance of the Alexandria summit attended by President Hafiz al-Asad, President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, and King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, on 28 and 29 December. The meeting also dealt with the summit's statement, which stressed the need to strengthen the Arab League's role, revive Arab solidarity, and achieve just and comprehensive peace in the region.

Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid praised Syria's serious, balanced, and firm position and its insistence on achieving just and comprehensive peace based on the resolutions of international legitimacy that will serve the interests of all parties in the region. He also highly valued Syria's support for and eagerness to promote the Arab League's role.

The talks also tackled issues to be included in the Arab League's agenda during the session it will hold on 22 March, foremost of which are issues pertaining to the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons.

The two sides then stressed the need for the Arab countries not to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty unless Israel signs it. They agreed that this is the only way to render the Middle East free of all weapons of mass destruction, chief of which are nuclear weapons, and to prevent a nuclear arms race in the region.

Al-Shar' Briefs NPF Command on Peace Developments

JN1302185395 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 13 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Central Command of the National Progressive Front [NPF] held a meeting at 1200 today under the chairmanship of Muhammad Zuhayr Mashariqah, vice president and NPF vice chairman. During the meeting, the Command listened to a political report presented by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'. The report contained a comprehensive review of overall Arab, regional, and international political developments. The Command conducted a detailed review of the latest developments, especially related to the peace process, whose objectives Israel is trying to avoid. Moreover, Israel is seeking to obstruct the peace process and to replace a just and comprehensive peace based on the principles of international legitimacy and UN resolutions with separate deals. These deals do not lead to the desired peace but aim at dealing with each Arab side one by one to weaken the Arab position and to achieve partial settlements that achieve neither peace

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nor justice. Indeed, they represent a circumvention of the real objectives of the peace process and a slipping away from the responsibilities of real peace.

During its meeting, the Command stressed Syria's adherence to a just and comprehensive peace which is viable and lasting, restores territories and rights, and maintains dignity as well the Arab nation's higher interests and historical rights. The NPF Command highly valued the national and pan-Arab responsibilities shouldered by President Hafiz al-Asad and his continuous efforts in defense of the territories and right and to mobilize the potentials of the Arab nation to achieve greater objectives. These greater objectives sincerely express the nation's conscience, protect the Arab future from all dangers, and fortifies the pan-Arab fate against attempts to undermine it. This is accompanied by efforts to clear up Arab differences and restore Arab solidarity. The Command said that the rallying of our people and nation around the historical leadership of President Hafiz al-Asad represents the impregnable bastion that always makes Syria the model state that is able to defend the Arab right and embody the pan-Arab hope.

TISHRIN: Israeli NPT Stand Could Start Arms Race

NC1402122895 Paris AFP in English 1124 GMT 14 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Damascus, Feb 14 (AFP) - Syria warned Tuesday [14 February] that Israel's refusal to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) could trigger a new arms race in the Middle East because Arab countries would not tolerate Israeli "nuclear blackmail" indefinitely.

"By refusing to sign the NPT, the Jewish state is creating the conditions for a proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the region and opening the door to an arms race," the government newspaper TISHRIN said.

"Israel's attachment to its nuclear arsenal is a direct threat to the Arabs, who could not indefinitely tolerate being subject to Israel's nuclear blackmail without thinking of acquiring this weapon themselves."

The NPT, signed by 170 countries for a 25-year period in 1970, comes up for renewal at a conference in New York in April.

Israel, warning that it is still threatened by countries like Iran which are not involved in the Middle East peace negotiations, has refused to sign it and has never acknowledged possessing nuclear weapons.

However, Western experts say the Jewish state has about 200 nuclear warheads.

"If the international community is keen to reach a just and comprehensive settlement in the region it should compel Israel to sign the NPT," TISHRIN said.

Egyptian President Husni Mubarak insisted Sunday [12 February] that Egypt would only sign the extension of the NPT if Israel agreed to sign it.

Arab League Secretary General 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid was to meet President Hafiz al-Asad and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' here Tuesday to discuss plans drawn up by the League to make the Middle East a region free of weapons of mass destruction.

'Abd-al-Majid is due to travel Wednesday to Lebanon.

TISHRIN: Israeli Plans Do Not 'Foster Trust'

JN1102083395 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 11 Feb 95

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In an editorial today entitled "Israeli Hostility To Peace," the newspaper TISHRIN addresses the impasse experienced by Yitzhaq Rabin's government due to its peace stand, saying: We must be aware that the Rabin government's alleged eagerness to achieve peace is only a tempest in a teapot. This eagerness is elusive. For the person who is eager to achieve peace neither pursues an obstructionist policy, nor plants mines and explosives in the way of the peace process. Such a person neither resorts to maneuvering, nor seeks to circumvent the requirements and components of a true, just, and comprehensive peace.

TISHRIN highlights the record of the Labor-led and Likud-led Israeli governments with regard to the peace process and their anti- peace policies.

The paper adds: Given Israeli statements on plans to swallow Arab lands, advancing security pretexts, one reaches the conclusion that Israel will remain an entity that cannot, for a single moment, foster trust. For this entity, which seeks to carry out its aggressive strategy, harbors hatred and anti-Arab sentiments. It seeks to undermine our rights and our Arab lands.

Concluding its editorial, the paper says that Israeli logic is always lopsided. Shamir sought to drag the negotiations out over many long years in an exercise of futility, so he might keep up his settlement activities and bring in new immigrants. Meanwhile, Rabin's policy lacks coherence. He alleges he is seeking peace. In the meantime, he holds the components of peace in complete disregard and evades its requirements, chief among which is complete withdrawal.

Al-Ahmar, Bulgarian Delegation Discuss Peace, Ties

JN1402150095 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 14 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Comrade 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, assistant secretary general of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party [ASBP], this morning received a delegation from the Bulgarian Socialist Party [BSP], headed by Kiril

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Zhelev, a member of both the BSP Political Bureau and the Bulgarian Parliament, who is visiting Syria at the invitation of the ASBP National Command.

During the meeting, talks centered on the friendly relations and cooperation between the ASBP and the BSP and between their respective, friendly countries, Syria and Bulgaria. They also tackled the need to strengthen these relations for the benefit of both countries, to promote their struggle, to bolster peace and security throughout the world, and to enable nations to move away from domination.

They also discussed developments in the Middle East and the Balkans and exchanged views on each party's activity within its region.

Comrade al-Ahmar reviewed developments in the peace process, pointing out that the lack of progress so far is due to Israel's policy and positions and its refusal to declare its commitment to the bases of this process, namely, UN Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425 and the land-for-peace principle.

Al-Ahmar also stressed that Syria views just and comprehensive peace as a strategic option and that such peace cannot be achieved unless Israel carries out a total withdrawal from the Golan to the lines of 4 June, 1967, and from southern Lebanon and unless a mutual and balanced security for all parties is achieved. He added that true peace is one that can return rights, achieve the interests of the region's nations and states, and entrench world security and peace.

For his part, Zhelev stressed that his party and his country support Syria's stand, as well as the peace process and its goals in achieving a just and comprehensive peace in the region in accordance with the bases that are well known to everybody. He also said that Syria's position enjoys a worldwide respect because it is a principled position and is based on the international legitimacy and the rules of the peace process.

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Afghanistan

Rabbani Blames Foreign Nations for Prolonging Civil War

OW1502101595 Tokyo MAINICHI SHIMBUN in Japanese 13 Feb 95 Evening Edition p 4

[Report on "exclusive" interview with President-Designate Borhanoddin Rabbani by Kazuo Kojima in Kabul on 12 February]

[FBIS Translated Text] Kabul, 13 Feb—Commenting on the continuing civil war in his country, Rabbani complained: "Foreign countries are providing weapons to various warring factions, and that is delaying the end to the civil war in our country."

Demanding that these countries stop providing such aid, Rabbani revealed, as a practical step toward making a breakthrough, his idea for the establishment of a "United Committee," which would consist of representatives from various factions and provinces.

The Afghan leader also praised highly the peace efforts undertaken by Mahmoud Mestiri, the UN secretary general's special envoy to Afghanistan. It was the first time Rabbani had granted an interview to a Japanese news organization since 1993, when the civil war intensified in his country.

Since the collapse of the communist administration under former President Mohammad Najibullah in April 1992, armed conflicts have continued in Afghanistan, with the country divided into factions. There is a pro-president faction (Tajiks), another (Pashtuns) supports Prime Minister-designate Golboddin Hekmatyar, and another (Uzbeks) supports former communist General Rashid Dostam.

Commenting on the current situation, in which the anti-presidential alliance of the Hekmatyar and Dostam factions is trying to take over the Afghan capital, Rabbani protested: "Foreign intervention, in particular the supply by Uzbekistan of MiG fighter planes and heavy artillery to the Dostam faction, is bringing more and more suffering to the people."

The president also expressed displeasure at Pakistan, which allegedly is providing funds to the Hekmatyar faction.

Asked about allegations he has been "implementing policies that give preferential treatment to Tajiks," Rabbani said: "That is merely an excuse used by the opposition factions to justify using arms to take over the capital. If you look at how the Grand Constituent Assembly, the country's decision-making body, and the cabinet are organized, you can see that representatives have been selected equally from the various ethnic groups."

He criticized Hekmatyar, saying: "He who used force to break agreements every time they were concluded should be held responsible for the destruction and confusion."

Rabbani said he had no intention of heeding the strong opposition demands that he resign, saying: "That would only serve to create a political vacuum and cause more confusion. We have to create a new mechanism."

Asked about the details of such a "new mechanism," Rabbani said: "We will create a United Committee consisting of two representatives from each of the nine Mujahideen political parties, two regional representatives from each of the 30 provinces, and 10 neutral academics. The current government will delegate its power to the committee, which will then draft a new constitution in six months and transform itself into a new National Assembly."

He expressed appreciation for UN peace efforts, saying: "I feel the international community's aid is essential for our country's reconstruction. I seek the understanding of the United Nations, the major powers, and, in particular, Japan, which has made major contributions via its official development assistance (ODA) programs."

UN Advances Date for Power Transfer to 18 Feb

BK1402145995 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 14 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The UN Special Mission to Afghanistan has announced that a peaceful transfer of power will take place in Afghanistan on the 18th of this month.

In a brief press release issued today on the conclusion of the visit of Mr. Mahmoud Mestiri to Afghanistan, the mission appealed to all warring sides to cease hostilities, open all roads, and restore electricity to Kabul. The statement said the new developments in Afghanistan demonstrate the desire of the Afghan people for peace and their disillusionment with the present ?isastrous situation in the country.

In Afghanistan itself, reports say the forces of Golboddin Hekmatyar have withdrawn from Kabul area after being forced to flee by the Taleban Movement.

Taleban Troops Demand Passage to Kabul

BK1402154395 Hong Kong AFP in English 1504 GMT 14 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, Feb 14 (AFP)—A student-led extremist Moslem army stood poised to sweep into Kabul Tuesday [14 February] after capturing the headquarters of former Afghan prime minister Golbuddin Hekmatyar south of the city.

The Taleban, a force of Moslem militants, were face to face with Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani's troops just outside Kabul demanding entry to the city.

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They were entrenched in Sang-e Naushita town which has become the new frontline for the forces defending Kabul, which is just 20 kilometres (12 miles) away, the Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) said, adding Rabbani's forces were based between the Bini Hesar hills and Sang-e Naushita south of the capital.

"We have no personal enmity with any mujahedeen party but we will fight anybody opposing our general programme of collecting all the arms and creating an Islamic government," said a Taleban commander.

"We want the establishment of a single Islamic administration in the country and welcome anybody helping us in this line," he added.

Rabbani's troops had advanced from the capital to Sang-e Naushita which is only five kilometres (three miles) from Charasyab, the headquarters in Afghanistan of Hezb-e Eslami chief Golbuddin Hekmatyar, which the Taleban captured some hours earlier, eyewitnesses said.

The two are now as close as 50 metres (yards) in some sections.

AIP said negotiations were underway between the two sides over the Taleban demand they be allowed to freely enter the city where they plan to disarm all factions in Kabul.

The capture of Charasyab is a major setback for Hekmatyar whose headquarters 25 kilometers (15 miles) south of Kabul were considered impregnable.

"After very heavy fighting in Puli Alam on Monday, we marched down to Charasyab today without any fighting," said a Taleban commander, Mulla Borjan.

In the past few days Hezb mujahedeen have already lost the province of Lowgar, south of the capital, to the advancing Talebans and another stronghold at Maidanshar, southwest of Kabul.

Hezb spokesman Mangal Hussein said in Islamabad that its forces had evacuated Charasyab to let the Talebans "through to Kabul" which is still largely controlled by the opposing forces loyal to Rabbani.

The Hezb mujahedeen had moved to positions further to the east where they are strongly entrenched. Hekmatyar is said to be further south in Sarowbi.

Unconfirmed reports said fighting was continuing Tuesday around Chelsitoon, a district south of Kabul where more Hezb-e Eslami forces were grouped. Fighter aircraft were reported zooming low over the area.

The student-led Taleban emerged in the south of the country just over six months ago and are now a force to be reckoned with in the Afghan political and military jigsaw.

Diplomatic sources said commanders from both Hekmatyar's and Rabbani's forces were now defecting to the Taleban movement.

If this proves correct then the peace process begun a few weeks ago by the United Nations would be compromised, political observers said.

The UN has advanced the date for all parties in the Afghan conflict to come to Kabul to February 18 from February 20 to witness a transfer of power from Rabbani to a pan-Afghan organisation made up of independent personalities and representatives of the nine mujahedeen parties involved in the war against the Soviet Union from 1979-89.

Rabbani, who was elected president for two years in December 1992 and whose mandate expired on December 28, has already urged the United Nations to speed up the transfer of power because of the rapidly changing situation and balance of power in Afghanistan.

Diplomats and military experts maintain that the Talebans have the military and strategic support of Pakistan, but Islamabad steadfastly denies this.

Separately Tuesday, the Supreme Coordination Council of the Republic of Afghanistan (SCCRA) which has been battling Rabbani's forces said Tuesday it would cooperate with the UN plan.

The SCCRA consists mainly of Hekmatyar's troops and the Junbish Milli or Islamic National Movement led by Uzbek warlord General Abdol Rashid Dostam.

Hezb-e Eslami To 'Step Back' To Avoid Long War

LD1402203495 Tehran IRNA in English 2004 GMT 14 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, Feb. 14, IRNA—Afghan Government sources said that following fierce fighting Tuesday [14 February], Chahar Asiab, the biggest military base of the opposition led by Prime Minister Golboddin Hekmatyar, located 25 kms south of Kabul, has been occupied.

A source with the 'Jamiat-e Eslami' led by interim President Borhanoddin Rabbani said in a telephone conversation with IRNA here Tuesday night that forces loyal to Ahmed-Shah Masoud had laid siege to Chahar Asiab from two points pushing out the forces of the Hezb-e Eslami.

However, the Hezb-e Eslami office in Peshawar, Pakistan, said in a press release Tuesday that its forces had voluntarily chosen to step back in a bid to prevent an aggravating war in Lowgar and Chahar Asiab.

Lowgar Province is south of Kabul and of Chahar Asiab. Its center Pol-E alam, 55 kilmeters away from Kabul has reportedly fallen to the forces of the Taleban militant movement.

Hezb-e Eslami said its forces had chosen to step back in a bid to thwart Rabbani's scheme for fanning a long-drawn war and for making things difficult for the Afghan people.

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The recent military developments in the central parts of Afghanistan and around Kabul, are being regarded as basic changes in the power balance in that country.

Forces loyal to Rabbani have capitalized on the recent developments Afghanistan and have gained more influence.

Sources with the Hezb-e Eslami said they did not know anything about Hekmatyar's whereabouts, though neutral Afghan sources say he has moved to another base in Sarowbi 45 kilometers east of Kabul.

'Ready' for Cease-Fire

BK1502033095 Hong Kong AFP in English 0249 GMT 15 Feb 95

[By Sami Zubeiri]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, Feb 15 (AFP)—The fall of former Afghan premier Golboddin Hekmatyar's headquarters to the Taleban Muslim militants marked the movement's greatest victory as its power continues grow, analysts here said.

The capture of Charasyab, just 25 kilometers (15 miles) south of the Afghan capital, represented a major setback for Hekmatyar, and helped tighten the Taleban's grip on Kabul, they added.

Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Eslami faction has now lost three key positions in quick succession to the militant student-led movement, with the Talebans also wresting control of the Wardak and Logar provinces from the Hezb in the past few days.

Now, as they mass their forces south of Kabul, the Talebans are negotiating with embattled Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani's troops, who are based in Sangi Nawishta just 20 kilometres (12 miles) away, Afghan sources said.

The militants, who have gathered considerable strength since appearing from nowhere about six months ago, are demanding entry to the city and saying they will disarm all factions in the war-torn capital.

Rabbani, backed by his military strongman Ahmad Shah Mas'ud, holds most of Kabul, and has thwarted Hekmatyar's repeated onslaughts on the city which have claimed more than 20,000 lives over the past two years.

But now the president, facing a serious threat from the Talebans, has urged United Nations special envoy to Aghanistan, Mahmoud Mestiri, to speed up the peace efforts which have been dragging on with limited success for many months.

Diplomats have said that commanders of both Rabbani and Hekmatyar's troops, have been defecting to the Talebans, and a similar trend is thought to have hit pro-Saudi factional leader Rasul Sayyaf's Ettehad-e Eslami party, which is allied with Rabbani.

If confirmed, the desertions would further undermine the power bases of the rival leaders, who have been at loggerheads since the collapse of the once Soviet-backed communist regime in April 1992, analysts here said.

In response to the rapidly changing balance of power and military situation, the UN envoy Tuesday advanced the date for initiating the process for transfer of power to a pan-Afghan authority in Kabul to February 18, instead of February 20 as he had announced last week.

"The new development in Afghanistan demonstrates the desire of the Afghan people for peace and the disillusionment with the present disastrous situation in the country," Mestiri said in a statement Tuesday, inviting all parties in the conflict to witness a ceremony marking the start of the process in Kabul.

Hekmatyar's party has apparently responded positively to Mestiri's appeal to all warring sides to cease hostilities, to open all roads and to restore a power supply to Kabul.

"We are ready for cessation of hostilities," Hezb spokesman Mangal Hussain [name as received] told AFP here, adding that the truce would come into effect provided Rabbani's response to the call was also "positive."

However, analysts here feared that the possible disintegration of the two major parties—the Hezb-e Eslami and Rabbani's Jam'iyat-e Eslami—could blow apart the entire UN peace process, which was set up around the main Afghan factions.

The Talebans surfaced last autumn when they successfully rescued a Pakistan sponsored trade convoy bound for Central Asia after it was hijacked by mujahedeen rebels in the southern city of Kandahar.

The mainly-bearded Islamic school students, who also sport turbans, later captured Kandahar, an ancient royal capital southwest of Kabul. Since then they have scored a series of spectacular military gains.

Since emerging as a group of a few hundred religious students, their number has now swelled to 25,000 men, equipped with some 200 tanks, heavy artillery, missiles and a dozen fighter aircraft, diplomatic sources said.

But Afghan sources have said the group's main weapon lies in the support they have garnered from the people in areas under their influence.

Diplomats and Afghan experts have said the Talebans are militarily backed by Pakistan, although Islamabad denies the claim.

Government Statement on Recent Successes

LD1402222195 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 14 Feb 95

[Statement of the Islamic State of Afghanistan; date not given—read by announcer]

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[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful:

Dear compatriots, praise to the almighty and eternal God who has always enabled the valiant people of Afghanistan to pass every test with success and dignity. [Words indistinct] to go forward with steady steps for the supremacy of the word of God, the preservation and safeguarding of the Islamic revolution's values, national unity, and the territorial integrity of the country. The month of Ramadan, in the middle of which we now rest, is respected by all Muslims as the month of forgiveness and blessing and the month of great and brilliant victories. [Words indistinct] Dear compatriots, we all remember the events of the past two years, especially since the 11 Jadi, 1372, [1 January 1994] coup d'etat. Instead of dressing the wound of the people, in the course of this time the forces of corruption and sedition and puppets of the aliens and alien lovers created [words indistinct] fresh problems for our people. In order for general understanding and [words indistinct] to come into being, our Islamic state, which in military and political terms enjoys full supremacy [words indistinct], has expressed readiness for any kind of peaceful process of solution of the issues. Even in various matters it has shown flexibility and [words indistinct]. However, while knowing that they could not reach success militarily, the opponents insisted on a military solution and did not express cooperation for a confident and lasting peace. Eventually the Islamic state was forced to inflict resolute and crushing blows on them. The conquest of Konduz and the surrounding areas and the purge of the Dostam-Golboddin militia from that area show the fact that the state is powerful and that it can bring down the perpetrator of sedition and corruption and the predatory forces of [words indistinct].

Concurrent to the clearing up of Konduz and the surrounding areas, the areas south of Kabul, which had been turned into the center of turmoil and corruption, whence the calm life of the residents of Kabul was threatened, and whence they caused the killing of the oppressed and brave people of Kabul, [words indistinct] and the Islamic army of Afghanistan forces have become dominant in those areas and peace has been ensured there. As we have always told our dear compatriots, the state is in such state of a combat readiness that not only can it exercise defense against them, but also it has the full power to decimate their bases of sedition and corruption so that the life of the people can return to normal.

It should be remembered that the unity and solidarity of all mojahedin of the path of jihad at these sensitive historic moments can accelerate final victory against the forces of sedition [words indistinct] in the country's northern regions, under the leadership of treacherous Karmal, who are still making their last futile efforts. Surely, the brave jihadi forces, wherever they are, are able to properly discharge their historic mission in eliminating these servants of foreigners and standard-bearers of atheism and Godlessness.

In following its realistic and peace-seeking policy, the Islamic State of Afghanistan declares that Afghanistan belongs to its brave sons. The state earnestly urges that all forces who are fighting for the restoration of peace and stability [words indistinct] must accomplish their historic duty in collecting weapons, ensuring stability of peace, restoring law and order, opening highways, and solving other difficulties. The current situation and people's needs require the peace-seeking forces to continue working for the restoration of peace and stability of the situation [words indistinct] and to coordinate their efforts with the programs and plans of the Islamic State. The State is prepared to take [word indistinct] measures for the acceleration of the peace process in the country in consideration of the country's supreme interests. [words indistinct]

Bangladesh

Government Issues Statement on Strike; 3 Killed

BK1302153395 Hong Kong AFP in English 1457 GMT 13 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Dhaka, Feb 13 (AFP)—At least three workers were killed and 50 injured Monday [13 February] as Bangladesh's striking jute and textile workers clashed with security forces in eastern Ghorasal amid other sporadic violence, officials and police said.

The workers were killed when police opened fire during violent clashes. The UNITED NEWS OF BANGLADESH (UNB) News Agency said trade union leaders claimed five workers were killed in the incident, while another worker injured the previous day died Monday in a hospital.

The claim could not immediately be confirmed.

Police confirmed one death, but UNB quoting witnesses said an unidentified 14-year-old boy and a man were also killed in the clashes between more than 10,000 workers and police, backed by paramilitary Bangladesh Rifles.

UNB said 17 workers with bullet wounds were being treated at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital and several policemen were also hurt.

Angry workers uprooted rail tracks, set fire to a part of the Ghorasal station and a police jeep, the agency said.

Inter-district train and bus services ground to a halt Monday during as a nationwide 96-hour industrial strike called by the workers entered its second day.

Officials of the state-run Bangladesh Railways confirmed services were halted during the action, but gave no other details.

In sporadic incidents at the start of the 96-hour stoppage, several people were wounded Sunday after police used batons and rubber bullets against stone-throwing strikers on a road in suburban Demra, east of Dhaka, police said.

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A government statement, broadcast by the state television, blamed the clashes on "illegal" and "motivated" workers, adding police took action only after repeatedly warning the protesters.

The strike is the second such action since a January 22-24 stoppage during which three workers were killed in clashes with police.

Thousands of workers walked out Sunday demanding the government and private owners implement a 1993 agreement, which included a wage rise.

Several thousand workers and opposition politicians joined a mass funeral late Monday in Dhaka for those killed, although no bodies were present. Union leaders alleged police had taken away the dead.

Article Views Losses of Nationalized Textile Sector

BK1102114895 Dhaka DAINIK INQILAB in Bengali 29 Jan 95 p 1

[Article by M. Abdullah]

[FBIS Translated Text] Nationalized textile industries are incurring losses of 120 million taka monthly. The Bangladesh Textile Mills Corporation, BTMC, has lost 5.46 billion taka in the last 22 years since independence. At present, almost all textile and cotton mills under the BTMC are out of production. However, its workers and employees are getting their wages and allowances regularly although there is no raw material, no production, and no work. Funding for these wages and allowances is being provided by the government's 'unexpected expenditure' account. As a result, the debt burden of the mills has been gradually increasing.

A reliable BTMC source has disclosed that the corporation has been losing 120 million taka every month in the last two years. It has been reported that the losses are due to the payment of wages and allowances of workers and employees and other expenses of these unproductive industrial units. The source added that during the past 22 years, between the fiscal 1972-73 and fiscal 1993-94, the BTMC has lost 5.46 billion taka. For the past four years, that is between fiscal 1990-91 and fiscal 1993-94, the losses are estimated at 3.88 billion taka. The highest loss, estimated at about 1.4 billion taka, occured in the last fiscal year.

The present government has reduced BTMC's workforce by about one-fourth since it came to power by implementing the golden handshake program. Despite this, there has been no reduction in losses. On the other hand, it has increased. Since the present government came to power it has initiated privatization and closed down 10 of its 41 textile and cotton mills. The latest reports say that in the past four years only two of these 10 industrial units have been handed over to the private sector, but the question is whether these industrial units had been sold at proper prices.

Although sale tenders have been floated five or six times for the remaining mills where layoffs have been declared, no buyer has been found. The mills that are not closed have been virtually out of production in the last two years. As they are not operating, its machines are becoming rusty and spoilt. As a result machinery worth several million taka are turning into scrap. An official of BTMC's technical department said if this situation continues then there will be no alternative other than to sell them as junk. A source of the Privatization Board said they are considering selling the machinery, land, and other properties of these mills separately.

Meanwhile, the economic backbone of the BTMC has already broken down. The corporation is incurring millions of taka in expenses monthly, though there is no production or sale from these mills. Its idle workers and employees are being paid salaries and allowances. This money is being disbursed from the government's unexpected expenditure account. Mohammad Abul Kalam Azad, senior assistant secretary of the Ministry of Textiles, sent a letter to the chief accounts officer of the AGB [Accountant General of Bangladesh] bearing the Memo No. BM/SA-5/1 B-2/94 on 30 November 94 seeking a 105 million taka loan from the unexpected expenditure account to pay the wages of workers. The letter added that this money will be treated as a loan. The money has already been sanctioned and spent to pay the workers of different mills. A BTMC source said the government is taking funds from different accounts to pay workers with a view to preventing unrest and to stop them from launching any movement. This money is increasing the debt burden of these mills.

Zia Inaugurates 3d Satellite Earth Station

BK1202135995 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh External Service in English 1230 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has inaugurated the third satellite earth station in the country and the second international trunk exchange at Mahakhali in Dhaka on Sunday [12 February].

Speaking on the occasion, the prime minister said, with the commissioning of the satellite earth station, the country's telecommunication linkages with the rest of the world have been doubled. This will help establish easier and softer communication with the outside world. Begum Zia said the present government is striving hard to ensure one telephone set for every 260 people by the year 1997. She said after assuming power the government has provided 74,000 additional telephone connections throughout the country. Within December this year, 100,000 connections in Dhaka, 50,000 in divisional headquarters will be added. She said measures have also been taken to give 300,000 new connections within next three years and 800,000 new ones by the year 2000. The prime minister said already 56 thanas [police station zones] have been provided with card phones and directions have been given to the P and T [Posts and Telecommunications] minister to set up card phones in

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another 100 thanas. She said now even the rural people can easily communicate with their near and dear ones very quickly. Begum Zia further said the government has opened up the telecommunication sector for private sector investment in order to expand telecommunication facilities. Telecommunication at the thana levels, cellular phones, paging, trunking, and (?riverine) communication systems have already been alloted to the private sector. Begum Zia said work is going on to build a fourth satellite earth station for establishing direct communication between Sylhet and London. The satellite earth station has been constructed over 8.6 acres of land at a cost of over 645 million taka. The World Bank has provided over 366 million taka.

The Mahakhali satellite earth station is equipped with 15 meters diameter dual feed, cathode ray type of antenna, and 700-volt high power amplifier. It has a capacity of 1,918 telephone circles without digital circuit indication equipment. It will function over the high-powered correspondent intensive satellite based at 66 degree east longitude along the equator, 35,800 kilometers over the Indian Ocean. The new international trunk exchange has an initial capacity of 2,600 trunk circuits, including 1,300 international and 13,000 domestic circuits. Its ultimate capacity is 1,600 trunk circuits. [figures as heard]

After inaugurating, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia talked with the ambassador of Bangladesh to Japan, F.M. Rashid Ahmad, directly over the telephone.

India

Commentary Welcomes Energy Deals With U.S. Firms

BK1402061395 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 14 Feb 95

[Commentary by T.N. Ashok]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India and the United States have further consolidated their economic ties by signing 23 commercial agreements in the power sector valued at over $1.4 billion. The agreements were signed in New Delhi yesterday in the presence of the visiting U.S. Energy Secretary Ms. Hazel O'Leary and Power Minister Mr. N.K.P. Salve. The agreements, covering both the conventional and nonconventional energy sectors, involved setting up major projects located in six states of the country. The deal will strengthen collaboration in the electric power sector and establish partnership to develop and deploy renewable and energy-efficient technologies. With this, the total number of commercial agreements between India and the United States goes up to over 40 involving a total investment of $10 billion.

Several agreements were signed in July last year when Ms. O'Leary visited India as the head of U.S. President Bill Clinton's special mission. As Ms. O'Leary puts it, some of the agreements envisaged the creation of high-quality jobs and high-paying jobs for the technically qualified personnel in India. Hailing the agreements, Mr. Salve said more are in the pipeline. Businessmen accompanying the U.S. energy secretary estimated that there is potential for investing at least $50 billion in India in the next few years.

Some of the major agreements signed yesterday were a $750 million deal between (E.S.H. Cole) Company of Pennsylvania and Mukul International Private Limited to develop an integrated energy production development project mainly involving solar-thermal energy. Another significant agreement related to the memorandum of understanding between the noted U.S. Tennessee Valley Authority and the state-owned National Thermal Power Corporation to establish a joint venture that would introduce speciality coal-fired plant overhaul, refurbishment, and upgrade services within India and other countries. (Omnion) Power Engineering Corporation of Wisconsin signed a contract with (NEPC Micron) Limited for the supply and installation of a 100 kilovolt grid interactive photovoltaic power plant in Tamil Nadu. Tata Energy Research Institute tied up with Lockheed Environmental Systems and Technologies of Texas, along with its partner (Ecco) Energy International of Colorado, to develop a 50 megawatt gas-fueled power plant in Uttar Pradesh valued at $50 million each [as heard].

Minister Views Davos, Customs Reforms

BK1102124895 Delhi BUSINESS STANDARD in English 10 Feb 95 p 10

["Excerpts" of interview With Commerce Minister P. Chidambaram by Subir Roy; place and date not given]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Q: You have just come back from Davos. From that perspective, how do you feel India compares with other emerging markets?

A: The two countries at the top of the emerging markets league are India and China. This is because of the vastness of the markets they have to offer. The rest are in the next division. This doesn't mean that some smaller nations do not have an edge over the big two, Despite the smallness of their markets, they offer a better environment for foreign investment. So we have to capitalise on our size.

Q: Did China steal the show at Davos?

A: No more than what India did last year. It is not possible for the Prime Minister to go to Davos every year. China's finance minister Zhu led their delegation, He is the equivalent of our Manmohan Singh and is their economic czar. Zhu tried to reassure the gathering over their apprehensions but didn't quite succeed. He admitted that inflation was running at 20 per cent but I guess it is more. He was asked about default by Chinese state enterprises. Lehman Brothers have filed a suit for the recovery of $52 million. The ability of the Chinese to honour their debts and the adequacy of their legal system are being questioned.

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Q: So what is the agenda ahead for India?

A: We need to act on three fronts, One, there has to be more opening up in the financial sector, banking and insurance. After the JPC [Joint Parliamentary Committee] Report, we don't seem to encourage the entry of foreign banks. Two, we need to relax further the entry norms for foreign direct investment. Too many cases have to be referred to the FIPB [Foreign Investment Promotion board] and its procedures are still dilatory. We do not have the one window clearance which was promised. In any case the expression has become a cliche. What we need is an escort service to see through investment proposals. Three, there is generally a sense of unhappiness about the way we have opened up the infrastructure. There is still policy ambiguity.

Q: What needs doing from our point of view?

A: Well, there should be no hesitation in opening up in the areas of telecom, power and oil and gas. The government already has a big presence here. But the problem is that we are moving from government monopoly to oligopoly without there being genuinely more competition. How do you have competition if you allow just one private provider to compete with DoT [Department of Telecommunications]. What matters is whether tariffs will come down as a result of deregulation as has happened the world over. We are still going on with licensing. Today it is the licensing of monopolies or doupolies where each one will take advantage of the other's inefficiencies and the consumer will not be better off. In power, why should there be a case-by-case approval, why not open up completely and allow whoever wishes to set up a plant to do so, subject only to environmental clearance. For example, there is criticism that the Enron power project is too high priced. This would not have happened if you had done away with the case-by-case approach.

Q: What now needs doing on the foreign trade front ? Have we rolled back from what we had achieved?

A: The basic policy is intact but there is a reliance on licensing rather than using non-discretionary policy support for exports. My thrust was for the latter. The international price reimbursement scheme [IPRs] and value based advance licences [Vabal] were non discretionary. I introduced special import licences [SIL] as an intermediate and exceptional instrument. Now IPRS stands abolished and Vabal is under attack. SIL is heavily relied upon but it cannot serve as a policy instrument. If you want to remove quantitative restrictions then do not shift something from the negative list to SIL, simply put it on OGL [Open General License]. Engineering exports have not done well this year and IPRS was a major instrument for promoting engineering exports. IPRS is helpful as we don't have a quicker and more efficient way of reimbursing exporters taxes paid on their purchases. Look at the long term consequences of not emphasising exports. Of all the streams of foreign exchange earnings, the ones that we can truly call our own are exports and tourism. If you start relying overmuch on portfolio investment or NRI [Nonresident Indian] deposits then one day you may become Mexico.

Q: What more needs doing by way of administrative reforms on the trade from?

A: We must reform customs. Our entire tariff structure and customs are anti-exports. Most court cases arise not out of import-export regulations but customs, fighting over if item A can really be called A. The tariff structure is much too dispersed and complex. You should have just one tariff for raw materials, one for intermediates and one for finished goods and the rest will adjust themselves. Today tariffs are being used to influence the entire pricing structure of industry. Everything that goes into exports must be able to come in easily.

Q: But the problem is that some items like synthetic fibres are raw materials for some and finished goods for others. Individual companies do considerable lobbying to perpetuate this complex web of duties.

A: Well, you can have a maximum of, say, six rates. Not only should tariff rates be cut substantially, they should be simplified and their number and dispersal reduced. The world over, most tariffs range between 0-15 per cent. But if you have a dispersal of 0-65 per cent, then that causes grave problems. We should go for pre-export and pre-import certification by selected world renowned agencies and also our own agencies for quantity, specification and price. Customs should not try to second guess on these. Policy in this regard should be determined, other than to promote exports, by the level of protection that an industry requires and the revenue needs of the government. That is all.

Q: Most foreign observers are qualifying their prediction about India's future on chances of political uncertainly. What are the vibes you received at Davos?

A: When I was at Davos, a major intra-party row was going on in India but that made no impact. Foreigners recognise the basic stability in our polity, unlike what obtains in China where the army, the communist party and the regional satraps are independent power centres. But foreigners are concerned about the stability of India's political parties which are prone to split and merge. This creates uncertainty over policy making and governance. I would like India to have a two-party system, at least at the centre. I see the Congress as one of two such parties. I would be concerned if the Congress were to lose a national, as opposed to a state, election.

Q: The way things are going, a coalition at the centre seems inevitable.

A: I don't think it is inevitable. But if it happens, we require great wisdom and maturity to work it at the centre, qualities which are quite scarce today.

Q: Is there life for India after the Congress?

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A: Certainly there is life beyond the congress but I do not think the demise of the Congress is round the corner. But there won't be too much hope if there aren't at least two or three national parties in India. I shudder at the thought of India being ruled by a coalition of 25 regional parties.

Q: Do you feel that the decline of the Congress is linked to the breakup of the old coalition that constituted its support base? Where are the Harijans and Muslims in the Congress?

A: The Congress must coopt the underclass. The reservation of backward classes was an original Congress policy that is at least 44 years old but for a period we vacated that space in favour of V P Singh. We must coopt the poorer sections without recourse to populism. The difference between NTR [N. T. Rama Rao] and Laloo Yadav and the Congress is the difference between populism and empowerment of the poor. We began in the right direction but wavered. We have to first ensure that pachayati raj institutions come to the fore. The way to provide them with adequate resources is to follow the 1989-90 practice of funding Jawahar Rozlgar Yojana by devolving funds directly to the panchayats [village councils]. We have to treat the village as a unit of devolution, both for political and economic power.

Q: You are perceived to be close to both the Gandhi family and the Prime Minister, How do you see yourself?'

A: I don't see any contradiction between the two. In fact, there is none. When the PM seeks my views or deputes me to a meeting I do it. I work with Mrs Sonia Gandhi for the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation. I have found no difficulty in being what I am.

Q: There is the perception that Mr Rao and Mrs Sonia Gandhi constitute opposite poles in the party.

A: The perception is mainly because of newspaper and magazine reports. I don't think there are two sides. I think that Mrs Sonia Gandhi has some concerns but these are the concerns of the average Congressmen—the Verma and the Jain commissions and the trial of the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case. My impression is that the government is in the process of addressing these concerns. Some of us have been silent prods for this. My impression is that the Prime Minister has always understood the concerns, but because responsibilities are so dispersed and divided, matters have taken longer than they should have.

Q: There is a feeling that the Prime Minister cannot win elections for the party.

A: We have won Madhya Pradesh and Himachal. We have lost Andhra and Karnataka. What will happen in the coming election in the four major states is anybody's guess. For both victory and defeat, the party as a whole must bear responsibility. As of today, I would give the Congress a better than even chance of winning the national elections in 96. As of today.

Q: The congress's biggest setback is the loss of support of the minorities.

A: I agree with that since the Muslim vote is about 10-11 per cent, the Congress will be a sure winner if the Muslims vote for it. But I have found during my travels within the country that their psyche has been deeply wounded. I think we need to find men and women within the party to reach out and talk to them. That perhaps is not happening now but that does not mean it cannot be done.

Government Borrowing, Subsidy 'Outflows' Viewed

BK1102110795 Delhi BUSINESS STANDARD in English 11 Feb 95 p 11

[Editorial: "Big Brother's borrowings"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The central government's short and medium term borrowings, including the latest issue of zero coupon bonds, has thrown up contradictory trends in the yields of different types of securities. The yield on the latest five year zero coupon bond is 12.71 percent with a cut-off price of Rs [rupees] 54. With financial institutions also increasing interest rates on term loans, the Centre's short and medium term borrowings are also likely to become dearer. The advantages of such borrowings will be seriously undermined if the trend of rising yields on security, as reflected in the recent months, continues. The Reserve Bank of India [RBI] has been compelled to offer higher yields on 91-day and 364-day treasury bills following the upward movement in the yield to maturity in the secondary market. The cut-off yield on 91- day T-bills has shot up from 8.75 per cent in November to 10.89 in the last auction. The turnaround in the industry and the subsequent rise in demand for credit has made it more profitable for banks to lend, rather than invest in securities. The tightening of the money market is largely on account of commercial banks locking up over Rs 29,000 crore in securities. The banks have been off-loading securities but there are very few takers. Although the banks are booking losses in selling investment, this is only notional, because the rates on non-food credit have gone up significantly. However as several banks are using this route to meet their CRR [Cash Reserve Ratio] shortfalls, the pressure on call rates continue. As a result, the yields in the secondary market are on the rise. Banks desperate to raise liquidity are selling 364 T-bills, offering a yield of 12.5 per cent. In fact current yields have become more attractive than yield to maturity. This is because banks want to improve current cash flows.

The tightening of the market has led to undersubscription to the auctions of government securities. It is reported that the first three auctions in the month of December were undersubscribed to the extent of 40 per

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cent. The response to the 364 day treasury bills was also none too impressive. So, the Centre had to offer higher rates to borrow money from the market. But there is a flip side to this. Borrowing at higher rates will push up the interest obligations of the government. Already the interest obligations of the government, as reflected in the 1994-95 budget estimates, has shot up to Rs 46,000 crore. A further jump in interest payments will push the economy into an internal debt trap. The issue of zero coupon bonds was an attempt to avoid interest payments in the short-run. But at the time of maturity, the government will be presented with a huge debt burden. In effect, the government has simply postponed the day of reckoning.

In the current year the situation can still be retrieved if revenue expenditure is controlled and tax revenues are on target. alternatively, the government can borrow from the RBI. However the ceiling of Rs 6,000 crore of net credit from the RBI leaves little room for the government to juggle on that count. The only saving grace is that in the current year, the trend in both direct and indirect revenues, so far, is encouraging. But subsidy outflows are a cause for concern.

Iran

Velayati Interviewed on Foreign Policy

Part One

NC1302124895 Tehran SALAM in Persian 6 Feb 95 pp 1, 6

[Part one of a two-part interview with Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [SALAM] On the occasion of the Ten Days of Dawn, and since Your Excellency has been serving as foreign minister for most of the years since the revolution, please give us your general assessment on our post-revolution foreign policy and the successes that we have achieved throughout this period.

[Velayati] In the name of God, the almighty and merciful: Iran's foreign policy during the rule of the Islamic Republic has demanded serious and difficult efforts. This responsibility was assumed mostly by our colleagues in the Foreign Ministry. They were able, to a considerable extent, to achieve many of our foreign policy objectives or move toward many of our goals. I am not saying that we have reached all our goals, but I can say that we have been able to move toward them. Of course, we have had ups and downs, but the general course has been in the right direction. In view of the fact that both during the era of the Imam, may his soul be sanctified, and the present we have been under the supervision of the leader or leaders of the revolution—the Imam in the past and the esteemed leader now—the general direction of the system's foreign policy has been maintained. I say this as a prologue.

But as to what the general direction of our foreign policy is, I should say that efforts have been made for it to be that of an Islamic rule. This, in a way, is a commitment that we have undertaken vis-a-vis other countries. In other words, these countries expected the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran not to be exclusive to Iran but to also belong to the world of Islam. This shows that Iran's post-revolution foreign policy underwent a qualitative change, something that calls for a detailed ideological discussion. But you also can compare deeds. You can compare our policy now with the one that the Foreign Ministry pursued during the past regime.

[SALAM] In recent years, especially after the cease-fire with Iraq, our country has made great efforts for closeness with the Persian Gulf states. It has done its best to create a detente in relations and to establish good relations that are in the interest of the region. However, in return we see that the Persian Gulf littoral states have not shown great interest in this. For example, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and even Kuwait, with whom we had very good ties, at least during the oil war [Gulf war], have not adopted favorable stances toward our foreign policy positions. What is your assessment of the steps that have been taken and their outcome?

[Velayati] The general situation is as you have described. In other words, we are trying to have as much tension-free relations as we can with our neighbors, including the Persian Gulf countries. This is part of the principles of our foreign policy. But we are trying not to be satisfied with minimum efforts, but to have the most friendly and close relations possible. Our relations with Pakistan are a good example of this. Not only is there no tension in our relations, but we also have comprehensive cooperation in various spheres.

However, there are some who have welcomed this and some who have not welcomed it as they should. One of the basic reasons for this is the intensification of impositions by foreign countries on countries in this region. After the oil war, or the occupation of Kuwait by Iraqi forces, some things were imposed on countries in the region that were involved in ousting the Iraqi forces from Kuwait, countries that felt obligated toward the West. The increased presence of some Western countries, specifically the American presence, has harmed security and the atmosphere of cooperation in the region.

[SALAM] Specifically speaking, the treatment of Iran by some countries in the region on the issue of the three Iranian islands shows that it is their own decisions and not decisions imposed on them. This indicates that these countries themselves do not have great interest in solving their problems with Iran.

[Velayati] This is correct. We cannot blame others for everything. As far as the three islands are concerned, this is a bitter truth that has only hurt relations with countries in the region. Making some imaginary claims—and that, on such a sensitive issue—will certainly lead to

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some problems in the region, as it already has. They know that we will not give up even one inch of Iranian territory. How can we ignore the Iranian nation's rights to these islands that are Iranian? One of the lessons that the eight years of defense taught was that both the region and the world should know that the Iranians and the Islamic Republic of Iran defend all of their territory and that we decisively defend our own rights without coveting the rights of others.

[SALAM] One of the topics that is being discussed is the Arab- Israeli peace process. We have a principled stance on the issue and consider the regime occupying Jerusalem to be illegitimate. This principled stance has been repeatedly declared. Therefore, two processes are moving in parallel. One is the process in which the Arabs are trying to bring themselves closer to these talks each day and the other is the one on the steps that Iran can take to oppose this compromise process. For example, are we able to form a united front against the Israeli regime or not? And how much have we strived in this direction?

[Velayati] The disintegration of the Soviet Union and developments in the Persian Gulf after Iraq's attack on Kuwait have been two major elements that the Israelis and their mentors have exploited to the utmost to promote their Satanic intentions. Unfortunately, some countries in the region were intimidated by the atmosphere that was created. You saw how during the Madrid Conference Arab countries who were involved in some way in the Arab-Israeli dispute agreed to participate in the conference. They lacked the strength to stay out of the conference. The talks were then continued in Washington.

But despite the very intense campaign against the opponents of compromise in the region, the Islamic Republic of Iran maintained its stance.

The fact that one person, one country, remains on the scene and resists is a serious thing. It is something that all those who have worked in the field of international politics know. They know what strength is needed to withstand the pressure that is inflicted. But the Islamic Republic of Iran did so because it did not believe in the compromise that the Israelis were propagating. We saw later that the new U.S. Administration did its best to defend a flimsy agreement for the Palestinians and to force the world to support it, too. And those countries that had close relations with Iran tried, in one way or another, to convince us to stop our resistance. In other words, a heavy wave of propaganda against those who opposed the compromise process started. They wanted us to sit silent. We asked: Why should we stop stating our views? We said that the Palestinian people are defending their stances with their teeth, claws, and stones from an enemy who is armed to his teeth; that none of the crimes that the Israelis perpetrate in the occupied territories are condemned while those people who are defending their homes with their teeth and claws are referred to as terrorists; and that the Westerners are accusing Iran of supporting terrorism because of its support for the Palestinians.

Iran plays a major role in this issue in the international community. They want to internationally legitimize what has been imposed on the Palestinians, but we are preventing this wherever we have more influence. In those forums where we have less influence, we do our best to declare our presence by declaring our opposition. Sometimes Iran is alone in its stances in the world. Even the most revolutionary and the most Muslim of Arab countries do not oppose Resolutions 242 and 338. Only Iran does. This means that they consider the Israeli presence to be legitimate inside the borders that were delineated in 1948 and they say that Israel should only withdraw from the territories that it occupied in 1967. The presence of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the political and international scenes is felt. Well, there was a degree of fear and concern that the Casablanca Conference would have granted legitimacy to these compromising efforts on the Palestinian scene. But if what was approved at that conference was not better than what was approved three years before in Senegal, at least it was not worse.

These are things on which we have worked. If you have the patience and the time, we can speak about these for hours. You can sit down with the experts who worked on this issue during the Casablanca conference and talk to them to see what efforts were made. People who are struggling for their rights do not hesitate to say that the Islamic Republic's support—even if only moral support—for the Palestinian people's aspirations is a great encouragement for them to continue their resistance.

[SALAM] Have any changes been made in Iran-Iraq relations and what impact can these relations have on the political process in the region? We now see that countries like France and Russia are trying to return Iraq to the international scene. Of course, this is because of their own interests. But, at any rate, our relations with Iraq have had a great impact on regional political issues as well as on the benefits that we can reap.

We should not waste time when others are trying to improve their relations with Iraq to ensure their interests.

[Velayati] We have no problems with Iraq. We have no problems in goodneighborly relations. If there is one thing that can improve our relations with Iraq even more it is sincerity. The Iraqi officials should not compromise relations with Iran and use it as a leverage in their great effort to get close to certain Western countries with which we have problems. They should not sometimes inopportunely exploit the situation and avoid an improvement of their relations with Iran for the sake of good relations with others. If relations with Iran is to be used as a leverage by Iraq to improve its relations with countries that do not have good relations with Iran, it will definitely not be establishing deep- rooted ties.

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Another point is that every time we were to have negotiations, there was an attack from the opposition groups—the Monafeqin [Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization] and their likes—that are based in Iraq and who receive all the facilities that the Iraqis themselves acquire with great difficulty from them. This will definitely not create a friendly atmosphere for normalized ties. Apparently if Iran-Iraq relations are to be growing relations, sincerity is a two-way street.

From our point of view, there are no major obstacles. That is, we want a delegation of Iranian experts to visit Iraq. We are waiting for the other side to agree. In other words, we have no problems in sending a delegation of experts there. We hope the Iraqis will agree on a date on which this delegation can visit Iraq. The outcome of the discussions between our and their experts on visits on other levels, namely my visit, can be a determining factor.

[SALAM] A topic that has been propounded in recent years is relations with America. At home we see how some consider many of our problems, mostly our economic ones, to be the result of severing relations with America. They say that if relations with America are established, a major development in foreign policy will take place and many of our problems will be solved. The question is: Is the time to propound such issues right? Is America a country with which we can establish relations under current conditions? Under what conditions and in which case can we establish relations with America?

[Velayati] Those who think that relations with America are the key to the Islamic Republic's problems are definitely mistaken. We have numerous examples of countries that have made the same attempt, expecting the same thing, and have failed to solve their problems. In other words, if we want to think very practically, we have ample facts to prove this. Look at the former Soviet Union, which was a world superpower. A decade ago the Soviet Union started to change. During Gorbachev's era many came closer to the West, specifically to America, hoping that their problems would be solved. The Westerners spoke very much but did very little for the former Soviet Union during the Gorbachev era. Soviet President Gorbachev appeared on the West's TV screens more than the Western leaders did.

Well, all these were propaganda possibilities that the Westerners granted to Gorbachev and his friends. Frankly speaking, their efforts did help the plans that they had against the former Soviet Union to succeed to a large extent, but many of their promises proved to be empty. The extent of assistance that the Westerners, specifically the Americans, had promised to the former Soviet Union and to Mr. Gorbachev was not what the Soviet officials expected.

What economic assistance did the West give them? I am not saying that it did not, but it was very minimal. Well, are the economic problems that Russia today is facing less than the Islamic Republic's economic problems? We cannot even compare the two. We cannot compare our problems in the Islamic Republic in view of the immense job that has been done here, the revolution, the Sacred Defence, and post-war reconstruction with problems faced by countries that did not have even one-tenth of the difficulties that the Islamic Republic had. And still our problems are less. I do not say that we do not have problems, but we should solve these problems with God's help and with our own efforts. The Islamic Republic's problems cannot be solved by paying a tribute to America. This is not merely a theory. We have seen examples of this in our times in other countries, the best example of which is the one I referred to. Therefore, as far as the Foreign Ministry and foreign policy are concerned, our stands on establishing relations with America have not changed.

[SALAM] Under what circumstances could relations be established, and is there a possibility that relations will be established in the near future?

[Velayati] I do not envisage the establishment of relations in the near future.

[SALAM] One of the dimensions of our country's foreign policy after the revolution, especially during the past few years, has been the expansion of relations with European countries. These relations have had their ups and downs and problems like America influencing some European countries and these countries' anti-Islamic sentiments. What is Your Excellency's assessment of the latest situation in our foreign relations with European countries, especially our political-economic relations with Germany and France?

[Velayati] Maybe from among the major European countries relations with Germany and France are the best. But this does not mean that there are no problems in our relations even with these countries with which we have good relations. The reason for this is clear. We have a religious government and they have secular governments. Once a minister of a major European country said: If we are without religion inside our borders, we should defend Christianity outside our borders. These words have a profound meaning. They mean that if they defend Christianity it is not because of their faith in Christianity, but because they are using it as a lever to pressure Islamic countries. Otherwise, pious and true Muslims and Christians have many things in common to be able to peacefully coexist.

You can see how they do their best to separate religion from politics. Among the things that they strive toward is opposition with Islam because today they see how support for religion has become synonymous with Islam. You can see how today in the world support for religions and divine values is growing. They consider Islam to be the reason for this because Islam is propounded on the world scene as the most dynamic religion. Islam is a religion that grants incentives to its believers to remain pious and to use this piety in their everyday lives. And since they [the West] oppose the mingling of religion

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with everyday life, they see themselves in danger. They view the Islamic headdress worn by a 10 to 12-year-old girl as an act that is contrary to their interests. If a girl wants to wear the headdress to school, they portray her as a domestic threat. But all this opposition actually shows the emptiness of their allegations on defending freedom. How can people be deprived of their most basic and elementary right: to choose what to wear? This only goes to show that a mere headdress tolls danger to them.

Actually, they consider any threat against secularism to be a threat against themselves. They are even worried that the Christians in Europe will turn to Christianity. I was told by the head of a Christian country who is a very pious Christian: What you did is a pattern for us pious Christians to follow. You see how they carelessly and—one can say—idiotically support anyone who insults Islam. If the people are willing to separate themselves from religion, then they actually support separating religion from politics. But they should not be so stupid. And if an insane and empty-headed person is found in a corner of the world of Islam—like this Bangladeshi person [Taslima Nasrin]—who insults Islam, this is tantamount to having insulted the Koran. Even when someone perpetrates a Satanic act, it takes a little bit of intelligence and cunning to do so. But this person has not even shown this type of intelligence. She has only insulted Islam; and this is the only reason why she is supported by some European political figures. This is mere stupidity because people like her only debase themselves in the eyes of the Muslims and rouse the hatred of the Muslims. Ultimately, their acts backfire.

Anyway, I only wanted to make a brief mention of this. But it seems I have talked in length. But a point that I would like to make here is that this is one of the reasons why some problems rise in our friendly relations with some European countries. However, if they want to have good relations with the world of Islam, it is in their interest to show that they have nothing against Islamic values.

Part Two

NC1402105695 Tehran SALAM in Persian 7 Feb 95 pp 5, 7

[Second and last part of interview with Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati with unidentified correspondent; place and time not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [SALAM] Please explain the impact that foreign debts have on our country's foreign policy.

[Velayati] Unfortunately, these debts and their repayment have been postponed. The major reason for this is the rapid fall in oil prices from $21 to $18 and probably to $15-$16 today. But we have also reached about $11. Well, this was a major reason for the delay in the repayment of our debts. Also, the thirst for post-war reconstruction that existed throughout the country and the thirst to fulfill the objectives of the First Five-Year Plan all joined to prevent us from repaying our debts on time. These things have definitely had a temporary impact on relations. But if we view the issue from another angle, we can see that the good relations that we had with some of these countries such as Germany, Japan, France, Italy, and even Switzerland helped us, in that these countries extended the deadline for repayment. And finally, the Foreign Ministry and the Islamic Republic's embassies too exerted some pressure, until everything was put back in order. But in the long run it is improbable that this issue will have had a serious impact, since neither Iran nor the countries involved regard relations as a short-term issue.

Next to the unfavorable reality of delayed repayments, there is another favorable reality and that is that in practice Iran is the most stable, wealthy, vast, and well-situated country in the region with a high degree of educated and efficient people. Currently we have more than 1 million university students and this is about 10 times more than the number before the revolution. Also, the growth in the number of educated people and experts in Iran cannot be compared with any other country in the region. All these are blocks that build the country's future. Therefore, tranquility, stability, trust in the future, and the fact that much of the money that we received was spent on infrastructure—from electricity to the development of education, and from the construction of roads to dams, and so on—are all the building blocks of the country's future. Therefore, if they see one weakness in their economic relations with us in the form of delayed repayment of debts, in the long run they see that it is in their own interest to have good relations with us.

[SALAM] Have Iran's economic relations with Europe been balanced? In other words, have we received as many political benefits from them in exchange for the economic benefits that they have received from us?

[Velayati] This may not apply everywhere. Of course, there is more coordination between economic and political relations at this point. But in the past this was not the case—at least not 100 percent. Those institutions that are involved in economic affairs want their job to be done because they are carrying out a duty. In other words, someone who does a major job in one ministry who wants the objectives of the First or the Second Plans to be implemented in every possible way may think that by sitting and waiting for political coordination he will not be able to get things done. But this is not what the country's management believes. Management believes in coordination between the political and economic sectors so that we can make the maximum use of our economic relations. But ours is a young government in comparison with other governments.

At the beginning of my comments, I said that our foreign policy has been constructed on a new basis. In other words, we cannot make the foreign policy of several centuries—from the Safavid to the Qajar and then to the Pahlavi dynasties—the same basis of our foreign policy

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today because these policies are completely different in nature. Our foreign policy is young and our foreign relations are young. Our government is a newly established government. Therefore, we need more experience so that we can enhance coordination among the various institutions and achieve the favorable experience that we need. In these few short years after the revolution, we ourselves have witnessed how we have acquired more experience and how our personnel and experts definitely work much better than they did a few years ago. This is an ambitious result that has been achieved.

[SALAM] For years now, the Afghan problem has had an impact on our country. In view of this, how do you see Afghanistan's future? What policies and programs does the Foreign Ministry have for solving the Afghanistan problem? And are there any hopes for the return of stability and independent rule to Afghanistan?

[Velayati] The Afghans ousted the foreign enemy in a very good way. But they themselves have been unable to come to terms with each other. And this has been to the detriment of Afghanistan. If Afghanistan remains a unified and united country without any domestic differences rather than being a tense atmosphere full of small and large domestic disputes, definitely it can safeguard its own and its people's interests in a much better way. But as much as we have tried during recent years to achieve a solution among the groups, unfortunately neither we, nor the Pakistanis, the United Nations, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, nor anyone else has been able to solve these differences. The more time passes, the worse the wounds of Afghanistan will become, and the more difficult it will be to heal these wounds. In other words, the hostility among the various Afghan groups will become older, and it is harder to heal an old wound than a new one. There were the old groups, and now a new group has sprung up from Qandahar—the Taleban group. This group too has its own views. Whether these views are right or wrong is not the issue. But the issue is that yet another group has been added to the existing groups in Afghanistan.

The Afghanistan problem affects us. Yes, it affects our national security and for various reasons we cannot remain indifferent to it. The other point is that after all, Afghanistan is an Islamic country and it is truly a pity for an Islamic country with all its potential to be wasted by its own hands. We have not seen anyone—whether in Afghanistan or abroad—who supports the existing situation and the existing reality on the Afghan scene. How all these forces can be made to come to terms with each other is the problem that no one has been able to correctly solve until now. And we are doing the best we can and whatever is right as a neighbor.

[SALAM] During the jihad in Afghanistan, Western countries extended great help to these groups. But apparently now the Western countries see their interests to lie in fanning the flames of this insecurity and instability in Afghanistan. Because of the developments in the Soviet Union and in neighboring countries such as Iran and Pakistan, what do you think has the Western countries' role has been in this war and in this strife among the groups?

[Velayati] At least they do not have the same motive as before for supporting the Afghan people. In the past, if they did support them, it was because of their fear of the former Soviet Union so that the former Soviet rule or the former Soviet forces would not gain access to the warm waters of the Indian Ocean. Now the Soviet Union does not exist any more. Therefore, they do not have the same motives as they did in the past. If we want to view the situation from a very optimistic angle, we should say that they have let Afghanistan be. But if we want to view the situation a little pessimistically, we can say that some of them are fanning the flames of the differences by indirectly supporting one group—something which is actually tantamount to opposing another group. This is like fanning the flames of domestic disputes, and we know that some Western countries support some groups and others support other groups in a very obvious way.

[SALAM] In view of the economic problems and the economizing on foreign exchange that we are now witnessing in the country, and in view of the diplomatic missions that we have abroad, what steps has the Foreign Ministry taken to economize on foreign exchange? Has it decreased the number of diplomatic missions abroad?

[Velayati] The Foreign Ministry should be completely closed down in order to economize foreign exchange! That was only a joke. But seriously speaking, decisions on reducing or increasing the number of embassies are not made by the Foreign Ministry but are based on the system's needs. The system of the Islamic Republic is based on having extensive presence in the world. Our many years of experience have shown us that extensive presence can be achieved through embassies. We have decreased our embassy staff and have tried to train personnel in several fields. In other words, if someone is sent to an embassy as a file clerk, he can also work in decoding, telecommunications, protocol, and consular affairs. In posts where we do not have much to do, we send one person instead of, say, three persons to do the job.

At a time when there are some in the world who are trying to isolate the Islamic Republic and to reduce and limit its presence in the world, we ourselves should not help them to fulfil their goal. We should surely economize. Currently we are economizing in two ways. One is by having decreased our staff in the embassies, and the other is by reducing wages. The amount that is paid to the personnel abroad is the amount that we are allowed to pay. Therefore, we have economized in these two fields. However, we do not consider the closure of embassies to be expedient.

We also hear comments by some who ask what the use of having embassies abroad is. Some believe that we should have embassies only in important posts such as Japan, China, Russia, Germany, France, and Britain and nowhere

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else. But this is contrary to our other principles in our foreign policy which calls for relations with Islamic and Third World countries. And relations minus an embassy are equal to no relations at all. [passage omitted]

The fact that a correct or incorrect picture of us is painted in the world has a basic impact on our political and international fate in the world. If we work in the field of politics to present a correct picture of ourselves, we will have taken a major step in preventing an onslaught against us. Why are we prepared to spend astronomical sums for our defense affairs? Our front line of defense is our political-propaganda line. If we are able to defend ourselves on the political-propaganda scene, we will not have the need to defend ourselves in the military field. And the experience of eight years of war showed us how expensive postponing such things can be for our people.

[SALAM] Although in recent months we have witnessed good activities in this field, it seems that our Foreign Ministry does not give as much information as it should to the public and to the press.

[Velayati] Of course you are right. But you, on your side too, should realize some of our restrictions in giving some information because if we explain everything in detail and, as you say, act more openly, then it is not only our friends, but our enemies too who will know and see what we are doing. This is not expedient. This is why you see how in countries which apparently act very openly, some things are published after a 30-year period while some things are never published. These are the restrictions that governments face in publicizing foreign policy affairs. We agree with what you say on the need for more contact. But this situation has improved during recent months.

[SALAM] As a matter of fact, in general you do speak more about and comment on foreign policy affairs. But you do not speak at all about domestic affairs. We would like to hear your assessment on domestic affairs such as cultural, social, and other issues.

[Velayati] No. Please ask the relevant officials to comment on these issues. If each person comments on everything, we will be stretching things too far and thus making issues more shallow.

[SALAM] Rumors have it that you will be one of the presidential candidates in the upcoming elections. We would like to have your opinion on this and to know if you have given thought to this. If the future candidates are clergymen, will you still participate in the elections or not?

[Velayati] Some other journalists too have asked me this question in the past. What I answered then applies now too. I am not a presidential candidate. Now that I am not going to be a presidential candidate, any competent person—whether clerical or secular—who is accepted by the majority of the people will have my support too. This person should definitely be someone who is supported by the esteemed leader and the people. In this case, we too will support him because what is important is not the individual but the interests of the country. We hope that a worthy person who will work for Islam and for the Islamic Republic is elected. But I myself am not a candidate.

[SALAM] My last question is that in view of your very busy schedule, do you study the press? What is your opinion of our press and especially on SALAM?

[Velayati] The gentlemen [in the Foreign Ministry] scrutinize the daily domestic press and prepare a round-up. I myself read the headlines of the domestic English and Persian press. I once again emphasize that a bulletin on the domestic press is published by the [Foreign Ministry's] press department. I study the important parts concerning foreign policy and I listen to the radio and watch television newscasts. I listen to some of the foreign mass media—whether in English or in Persian—on the radio especially at night when I have more time. I study many of the reports that are sent by the embassies which also are newsworthy items. I also peruse a foreign press analysis bulletin which rounds up topics published in foreign newspapers and magazines.

As for the domestic press, never has Iran's political and press life been so rich. I do not say that our newspapers are in an ideal situation. But if we compare today with the past, we see that they are richer, better, and more comprehensive. On the basis of figures that have been published by the Ministry of islamic Guidance, apparently we have about 600 domestic publications. This is an unprecedented number. There was a time when a newspaper was published for a couple of days and then closed down. This was in the past, during the constitutional movement, in the years between 1320-1332 [1941-1954], and early after the revolution. But all these have passed. Now the press is stable and you see that they are published. This is a sign of mental maturity. I think that SALAM too is more fair in its reports today than in the past. What I can say about SALAM is that it is a sound newspaper.

[SALAM] We thank you for having given us some of your time.

Ministry Denies Involvement in Iraqi 'Disturbances'

LD1402193895 Tehran IRIB Television Second Program Network in Persian 1900 GMT 14 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A Foreign Ministry spokesman has rejected claims made by an Iraqi Foreign Ministry spokesman claiming Iran's involvement in disturbances in the Hawr al-Hawizah area of southern Iraq. Tjhe spokesman, Mahmud Mohammadi, said it was meaningless for Baghdad to see a connection between Iraq's internal problems and UN Security Council Resolution No. 598. He, moreover, emphasized the full compliance of the Islamic Republic of Iran with the provisions of this resolution.

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Foreign Ministry on OIC Backing for Rushdie Fatwa

LD1402210095 Tehran IRNA in English 2012 GMT 14 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 14, IRNA—Spokesman of the Iranian Foreign Ministry Mahmud Mohammadi said here today that Imam Khomeyni's decree on apostate Salman Rushdie, who authored the highly blasphemous book 'The Satanic Verses' is in fact the judgement of the entirety of the Muslim world. He said Rushdie has blasphemed the religious beliefs of more than one billion world Muslims.

Referring to the recent attempts of the European Union to discredit Imam Khomeyni's historic fatwa on the capital punishment of the Indian born author, he said the Iranian nation and the Muslim world consider Rushdie as a vivid example of a western and zionist plot against Islam and Muslims. He noted that the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) in its 18th, 19th, 20th, and 21st assembly as well as in its sixth summit conference had condemned Rushdie for desecrating Islam and had endorsed Imam Khomeyni's fatwa. Mohammadi said OIC at its sixth summit also passed a resolution which entitled the member countries to show more concern and sensitivity about their cultural values.

He also rejected a recent allegation by the Iraqi News Agency that had incriminated the Islamic Republic in connection with the recent tumult in Hawr al-Huwayzah. Meanwhile, he said the Islamic republic fully respects the United Nations Security Council resolution 598 in connection with cessation of hostilities between Iraq and Iran and will continue to remain committed to the dictates of that resolution.

Commentary Views Christopher's 'Empty Threats'

LD1402154195 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 14 Feb 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Washington's political effort to put pressure against the Islamic Republic of Iran is still continuing. In this connection, the U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, on Monday February 13, once again talked about his country's decision on presurizing Moscow to stop Russia from offering nuclear technology to Iran.

Warren Christopher's remarks were in fact identical to comments made by other U.S. officials, including the speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives and White House chief of staff. Christopher's speech is indeed the stance of the (?framework) of the U.S. diplomacy. Nevertheless, it contains contradictions in the policies and remarks of the U.S. officials vis-a-vis political and propaganda trends against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Before Christopher's comments, White House chief of staff on Saturday February 12 [date as heard] was quoted as saying that the U.S. Administration will adopt certain strategies to sever cooperation between Iran and Russia on the sale of nuclear technology for the construction of atomic power plants. But shortly after the remarks, Warren Christopher rejected the possibility of reducing aid to Russia to compel Moscow not to sell nuclear reactors to Tehran.

It is now the first time, however, that contradictory statements were made by U.S. officials within the framework of America's political and propaganda strategies against the Islamic Republic of Iran. This has gone to the extent that informed observers say U.S. statements are now very confused, so much so that talking about military threats or inviting Tehran for political talks and direct dialogues has turned into a political and propaganda tool. However informed politicians view U.S. efforts as futile, especially in limiting cooperation between Tehran and Moscow.

Informed politicians say Moscow is not in a condition to allow its foreign policy to be depicted or altered by Washington by resorting to force or threatening to end economic aid. Hence U.S. officials, especially Christopher, are quite aware of the fact that their comments are just empty threats. In this connection, America, despite diplomatic efforts in Europe, has also experienced another failure in isolating Iran.

Russians Prevent TV Crew From Entering Chechnya

LD1402195495 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1930 GMT 14 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] According to our correspondent from Baku, the Russian Government has prevented an Islamic Republic of Iran's television crew from going to the Republic of Chechnya. Despite holding a press transport and two weeks visa in Baku, this team has just been unable to get permission to enter the Chechen Republic.

Reasons for Banning JAHAN-E ESLAM Outlined

LD1302184195 Tehran IRNA in English 1535 GMT 13 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 13, IRNA—Deputy Minister of Culture and the Islamic Guidance, 'Ali Akbar Ash'ari said here on Monday [13 February] that the press supervisory board decided to ban the morning daily JAHAN-E ESLAM for its violaiton of the privisions of the press law.

The deputy minister said that the morning paper had insulted the officials of the Islamic Republic and violated the Article 6 of the press law.

The press supervisory board consisting of the representatives of the judiciary, legsilature, Culture and Islamic

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Guidance Ministry, Culture and Higher Education Ministry and the press decided to nullify the license of the daily after lengthy session, he said.

He said that JAHAN-E ESLAM had already infringed the press law several times in the past, propting officials concerned to warn the daily to observe the press law.

The official accused the daily of attempting to tarnish the image of officials before the Irnaian people by publishing insulting articles.

It is said that those running the daily were seeking excuses to close down the newspaper becasue of its low circulation in a bid to give the impression that its closure was not due to their mismanagement.

The 5th note of Article 6 of the press law prohibits the press from encouraging individuals and groups to get involved in such activities that are against the security and interests of the Islamic Republic inside the country and abroad.

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